

MANAV JEEVAN AUR BHAGWAT DHARMA

By

SWAMI AKHANDANANDA SARASWATI

Mangalacharana.

*Vishvam darpandrishyamaananagareetulya, nijaantaragatam
Pashyannaatmani maayayaa bahirivodbhootam yathaa nidrayaa,
Yah saakshaat kuture`prabodhasamaye`svaatmaaname`vaadvayam
tasmai shreegurumoortaye`nama idam shreedakshinaamoortaye`.*

*Janmaadasya yatonvayaaditaratashchchaarthe`shabhigna
Svaraate`ne`brahma hridaa ya aadikavaye`mukyanti yatsoorayah,
Te`jovaarimridam yathaa vinimayo yatra trisargomrisha
Dhaamnaasve`na sadaa nirastakuhakam satyam param dheemahi.*

Om Shantih Shantih Shantih

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Swami Akhandananda Saraswati.

Introduction.

: 1 :

The Shrimad Bhagwat starts with '*Satyam param dheemahi* – we are meditating on the highest Satya (truth that can never be negated).'

The word 'we' includes the *vaktaa-shrotaa* (speaker-listener), Guru-disciple, and everybody.

The *lakshya* (goal) of the Shrimad Bhagwat is not the attaining of any *sthiiti* (state; condition). Anyone can stay *savichaara* (having thoughts) or *nirvichaara* (when the mind is empty of thoughts). It is not like the main purport of the Samadhi Shastra (the ancient teachings about Samadhi). The Shrimad Bhagwat gives a *drishti* (viewpoint; vision), and it is such a drishti that if you have it you can remain *sukhi* (happy) in Samadhi as well as in *vyavahaara* (interaction). The Shrimad Bhagwat gives a Gnan that is equally useful in worldly interaction and in *paramaaartha* (the highest spiritual goal).

The book did not start with *vishnum parama dheemahi*, *shivam parama dheemahi*, *bhaanum parama dheemahi*, or *dheeyam parama dheemahi*. It does not say, 'We salute the Vishnu Shakti (Vishnu Bhagwan's power), Shiva Shakti, or the Shaktis of the different Devtas (presiding deities; supernatural powers). The Shrimad Bhagwat starts with '*Satyam param dheemahi*' – we meditate on that, which is the highest Truth.

The Shastras (ancient books of philosophy; scriptures) give a vision that is useful in all conditions. From the viewpoint of Bhakti (loving devotion to Bhagwan) the Shastras give us the viewpoint that everything is the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of Bhagwan. From the viewpoint of the Tattva (pure essence; pristine

element) the Shastras give us the viewpoint that everything is the *paramaatmaa* (the Supreme Atma; the Self of all).

We experience *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion) because of our *bhe'da-buddhi* (the intellect that shows separateness). This *raaga-dvesha* is wrong. The *bhraanti* (false understanding) of *bhe'da* (separateness) is also wrong. If the *bhraanti* is removed, the person will always be filled with *paramaananda* (supreme joyfulness), whatever condition he may be in.

This is where the Shrimad Bhagwat begins, and the same thing is stated at the conclusion of this book.

Tachchhudham vimalam vishokamamritam satyam param dheemahi.

That, which is *vishoka* (without sorrow) and *amrita* (the elixir that bestows immortality) is the Satya on which we do *chintana* (ponder; reflect; meditate).

The purport is that the Shrimad Bhagwat does not establish the Satya established by any particular group or *sampradaaya* (traditional religious sect). The Shrimad Bhagwat begins with the purpose of establishing the Satya that is *saarvabhauma* (universal), *saarvakaalika* (for all time; eternal) and *saarvade'shika* (for all places).

I draw your attention to another point at the very start.

Who all can benefit from the Shrimad Bhagwat?

I will tell you of an episode given in the Shrimad Bhagwat. Rain was scanty and food was scarce. The people suffered from want of food. Raja Prithu – who is an Avatar of Bhagwan – was angry with Prithivi (the Earth). ‘I will tear you apart!’ he threatened.

‘Maharaj,’ said Prithivi, ‘Ever since Creation, there have been famines caused by drought. Your ancestors were industrious in doing rituals to induce rain and build lakes. They grew crops with the water stored in the lakes. Why don’t you follow this pattern? Why do you get angry with me?’

Samaam cha kuru maam raajana de`vavrishtam yathaa payah.

(4. 18. 11)

Let my surface be made level for ploughing, and arrange for water to be available in all seasons. Arrange for fields to be irrigated. Use the methods developed by the people of yore. You will get the benefits, and your wish to provide food to your people will be fulfilled.'

What I wish to explain is that when the Prithivi was pleased, the milking of the earth commenced. Who all were benefited by the Bhagwat-Dharma? The Shrimad Bhagwat describes how all beings obtained their own milk (nourishment). Animals, birds, snakes, scorpions, etc all obtained their food. In this manner, all the creatures that exist in this creation, including the Devtas (presiding deities) and Danavas (Demonic races) were fulfilled with their *guna* (attributes). This is called the Bhagwat-Dharma.

This Bhagwat-Dharma is not restricted to human beings; even worms and the smallest of insects should get what they need for their sustenance. That is Bhagwat-Dharma!

Bhagwan removes the *dosha* (faults) in the earth. He also removes the dosha in water, as shown in the episodes of the deadly serpent Kaliya Nag He defeated. He removes the dosha in *agni* (fire), *vaayu* (air), etc. The entire Shrimad Bhagwat describes everything that is needed to be done for the *shodhana* (purification) of all beings and *tattva* (elements). It gives the *vidhi-vidhaana* (methods-rules) that benefit all creation. Had that not been the case, the Bhagwat-Dharma would not be the Bhagwat-Dharma!

The Bhagwat-Dharma is that, which is for Bhagwan's *prajaa* (children), for anything that has been created by Bhagwan, whether it is the *tattvaatmaka srishti* (the world made of the five elements), the *sarga* (order of Creation), or the creation of different species, or *visarga* (merging). The Dharma that is for the *kalyaana* (spiritual good fortune) of all, is the Bhagwat-Dharma. There can be no separate consideration for Asia, Africa, Europe, America, or Australia. It is for the kalyan of all.

The Bhagwat-Dharma does not expound on theories like certain *kriyaa* (actions) being Dharma and certain kriyas being *adharma* (that, which is contrary to Dharma). Even the viewpoint of some objects being Dharma is not given in the Dharma-adharma of the Shrimad Bhagwat, because *vastu* (objects) and kriya are the *aindriyaka upalabdh*i (things experienced by the senses) of the *guna* (good quality) and dosha. Therefore, the good or bad qualities of objects and actions are connected to the ten *indriya* (five sense organs and five organs of action).

The *niroopana* (ascertaining) of the Brahman and Dharma is in the ascertaining of the *ateendriya vastu* (the object that is beyond the scope of the indriyas; the Atma), and therefore, Dharma and adharma cannot be determined by the gunas and doshas of objects. They are determined by *vidhi* (the prescribed rules) and *nishe`dha* (prohibited by the Shatsras) of the ancient texts on religion.

Please keep this in mind: the Shrimad Bhagwat is filled with matters pertaining only to Satya. The word *sarvatra* (everywhere) indicates *de`sha* (place), but it is *paripoorna* (complete in itself) even if desha is cut away. The Satya of the Shrimad Bhagwat is *sarvakaalika* (for all time – past, present and future). Furthermore, it gives *bodha* (comprehensive understanding) of the Satya even if time is cut away. It tells us about the Satya that remains after all matter is cut away. Therefore, it is not proper to limit this Satya to one category, saying that the Bhagwat-Dharma is only the attainment of Samadhi. Oh, no! It is described that even meaningless actions can be the Bhagwat-Dharma!

A man got frightened and he ran. As he ran he remembered, ‘Bhagwan is in the Mandir. Let me go and hide there.’ However, he died as he was running towards the Mandir. That became Bhagwat-Dharma.

You will ask, ‘How?’

Because his intention was to reach Bhagwan.

To investigate only the Satya, do things that benefit all beings, and not be limited to desha-kaala-vastu is the Bhagwat-Dharma. Narayana! The progress of humans is wonderful!

People say, '*Manushya dharma* (the Dharma of a human being)'. Who is a manushya?

'Manasaa seevyati' – one who develops relationships emotionally.

This manushya is the child of *shraddhaa* (faith) and Manu. The human species is not for only the scientists. Those who do not have intellectual capacity can have faith. It is not possible for any human being to be completely without faith.

A person who is *mananasheela* (inclined to think deeply) is called Manu, and a person who has faith is called shraddhalu. Shraddha is the mother and *manana* (profound thought) is the father from which human beings have originated. A person who is guided by shraddha and *vichaara* (profound thought) is called a manushya. This is why the Bhagwat-Dharma is not just for the Gnani (learned intellectuals) and great thinkers, but also for the *agnaanee* (those who lack Gnan). It is the teaching that gives kalyan to all.

Ye`vai bhagavataa proktaa upaayaa hyaatmalabdhaye`,

Anjah punsaamavidushaam viddhi bhaagavataan hi taan.

(11. 2. 34)

The meaning of the word *bhaagavata* is, *idam bhagavataa poorvam brahmanane` naabhipankaje` sthitaaya bhavabheetaaya kaarunyaat samprakaashitam. Bhagavataa brahmane` proktam – bhaagavatam*. Bhagwan showed compassion for all beings. He wanted to teach people the method by which they can obtain Him. He wanted to free them from *parichhinataa* (the feeling of being separate), and progress towards the *nitya, shuddha, buddha, mukta* (eternal, pristine, enlightened, liberated) *parama satya* (highest Truth; supreme existence) Paramatma. *Aatma-labdhyaate` brahmaa* – Brahma means the Bhagwan seated within the *antahkarana* (fourfold mind, or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations, and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality). The ahankara is also called Hiranyagarbha. Bhagwan has revealed the method by which the kalyan of all beings in creation can be obtained.

Bhagwan is seated in the antahkarana of all Creation as the *chaitanya* (pure consciousness). He is present in the antahkarana of all – ants, worms, spiders, animals, birds, etc. He wants the kalyan of all; *laukika* (of this world) kalyan, *paaralaukika* (of other worlds) kalyan and *paaramaarthika* (spiritual) kalyan. That, which is successful in bestowing prosperity, Dharma, *bhoga* (worldly pleasure), Moksha (liberation from rebirth), and every type of *mangala* (good fortune) to all beings, is called the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Here, the word Dharma does not mean *bhaarateeya* (Indian) Dharma. No prefix is attached to the word Dharma. People attach Dharma when it is connected to an Acharya (the Master who taught a specific school of thought). For example, the Buddhist Dharma, the Jain Dharma, the Christian Dharma etc. The word Dharma used in our Vedic books has no adjectives.

*Dharmo vishvasya jagatah pratishthaa, loke`dharmishtham prajaa upasarpanti,
Dharme`na paapam apanudati, yato abhyudaya nishre`yasa siddhih sa dharmah,
Chodanaa lakshanartho dharmah, athaato dharmam vyaakhyaasyaamah.*

[Dharma is the substratum that supports this world. People should be such that they believe in Dharma. Dharma destroys paapa. Dharma is that, which gives prosperity and spiritual growth. Artha (worldly wealth) and *kaama* (fulfillment of worldly desires) are born from Dharma. This is the definition of Dharma.]

No adjectives, like Jain, Christian, Islam, Buddhist, Hindu, etc are attached to Dharma. Dharma is for the kalyan of the whole of Bhagwan's Creation, for the protection and welfare of every being and all that is created.

The other point that must be kept in mind is that the Ishwara we ascertain is the Ishwara who existed before the world was created, and will exist after the world is destroyed. Our Ishwara has no connection with the *jaati* (group), country, or *sampradaaya* (traditional religious sect). Our Ishwara is not a Hindu Ishwara, Muslim Ishwara, or Christian Ishwara!

It is an amazing fact about our Ishwara that He is the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana kaarana* (the cause that is the substance as well as the instrumental factor) of which this world is made.

There are other Dharmas that do not accept an Ishwara, resulting in confusion and disorder. In some the Ishwara is *niraakaara* (without form). He creates the world and detaches Himself from it. In the Vedic Dharma all the Sampradayas – the Shankar, Ramanuja, Madhava, Vallabha, Nimbarka, Shaiva, Shakta, Ganapatya – accept that the Ishwara does not detach Himself from the world after its creation. It is the Ishwara Himself who is in the form of the world. He is the *abhinna* (not separate) *nimitta* (instrumental factor) *upaadaana* (substance; matter) *kaarana* (cause) of His own Creation. It is like the clay of which a pot is made, or the gold of which an ornament is made, or iron of which an implement is made. The Ishwara is present in every substance of the world.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj and Shri Madhavacharyaji Maharaj say, '*Aham idam sarvam eeshvara e`va bhagavaana e`va* – I, and all this, is the Ishwara and Bhagwan.' You know about the Ishwara of other Sampradayas, and connect their imagined ideas to the Ishwara as ascertained in our Shastras. This results in a great deal of confusion.

Our Ishwara is the cause that is both the substance and the instrumental factor of this world. It is true that this is a *vivarta* (option; variable), *parinaamee* (having a conclusion; resulting in different forms), *aparinaamee* (not having any result), *avikrita* (not subject to distortion); but it is the Ishwara incarnate who is present in the form of the world. He is not sitting in some remote seventh level in space as a formless entity. He is our *jeevana* (life). He is in our speech, in all we see and eat, and in our sleep. The purport of this is that this is why a *nirvichaara dashaa* (state of being free of thoughts) is not the only method for obtaining the Ishwara; nor is Samadhi.

Jahan jahan chalaun soyi parikramaa, jo jo karaun so poojaa.

(Wherever I walk is parikrama – respectful circumbulation; everything I do is puja – worship.)

This same *drishti* (viewpoint) is attached to our Gnan about the Ishwara. The message in the Shrimad Bhagwat about the kalyan of all beings – and especially about our own kalyan is what I will endeavor to explain to you in the form of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The First Canto.

The Extraordinary Quality of the Bhagwat.

The *siddhaantavaada* (those who adhere to the principle of Advaita Vedanta) say that all the *dvandva* (duality) are *mithyaa* (false; something transient). For example, *pramaana-prame`ya* (the proof-that, which is proved), *kaarya-kaarana* (effect, the objects in the world – the cause of creation), *aatmaa-anaatmaa* (the Atma – that, which is not the Atma) etc. All these are created as soon as they are perceived. When we decide, ‘This is a son’ we simultaneously decide that he has a father. Each needs the existence of the other.

Therefore, when we experience the obtaining of some object through the indriya (five sense organs and five organs of action) we decide on the *tattva* (element; true form) based on our experience of the object. However, the limited capacity of the indriyas we perceive only some information about the name and form of the objects. The indriyas do not give us a complete knowledge about the *shuddha satya* (unadulterated, eternal truth), the Tattva of the object.

The Vaishnavas (who worship Bhagwan Vishnu) say that both are Satya, and the Buddhists say that both are mithya. The principle of the Vaishnavas, Shaktas (worshippers of the Devi; Shakti), Shaivas (worshippers of Bhagwan Shiva), Saurya (worshippers of Surya Bhagwan; the Sun), etc is that both are Satya. The Buddhist principle is that both are mithya.

If we ponder on the principle of the Shrimad Bhagwat we will find that there is a *vastu* (object) beyond both the Satya and the mithya that is revealed by this Satya. The *kaarya* (effect that is this world) and *kaarana* (cause of the interactive world) are both superimposed on it.

Yad adhyaaropitam tad nishidhyate`.

That, which is superimposed is subject to negation.

And, the substance on which an object is superimposed is revealed in its pristine form as soon as the superimposition is removed.

In the principle of *upaasanaa* (loving worship) Satya is accepted in two forms. The first is the Ishwara Satya, and the other is the *jagata* (this world) Satya.

The Ishwara creates, and becomes everything – this is the *nitya* (eternal) Satya. The jagat is what is created and destroyed – it is the number two Satya.

The Buddhists say, ‘That which you call the number one and number two Satyas are both *saape`ksha* (needing some other). The karya has no existence without the karana, and the karana has no existence without the karya.

In answer to this, the principle of our Vedanta, our Brahma Sutra, our Bhagwat, is that they (the Buddhists) believe Satya to be of two kinds. One is that, which is never perceived, like a flower in the sky or the son of a barren woman. The other is perceived, but is subject to change. It is negated in time.

However, there is one Satya that remains unchanged. Time does not affect it in any way, nor does space separate it. The principle of karya-karana does not apply to it.

That means, *asatya* (that, which is not an eternal unchanging existence) is of two kinds – perceived at times, and not perceived at times. Satya, however, is of one kind only, and that is the Atma-Satya.

The Atma-Satya ascertained by the Shrimad Bhagwat is the *parama* (supreme) Satya. That means, it is neither the *ubhayavidha* (amphibious) Satya of the principle of upasana – which is the karya-karana – nor is it the principle of the Buddhists that refutes the two Satyas. The Shrimad Bhagwat describes the *adviteeya* (non-dual) Satya that is separate from both principles.

Janmaadasya yatoanvayaaditaratashchaarthe`shvabhignah.

[The Paramatma is the cause of the birth and death of all. He is known through anvaya, meaning a connection, and *vyatire`ka*, meaning being unconnected.]

Another point is that the Dharma of the Shrimad Bhagwat is for the whole of Bhagwan's *prajaa* (beings born from Bhagwan). Whatever is created by Bhagwan is eligible for the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Bhagwan gave this *upade'sha* (teaching; sermon) to His first son, Hiranyagarbha Brahma. Hiranyagarbha is the *sookshma* (subtle) *samashtigana chaitanya* (the universal consciousness that is all-pervading). This is why Narayana gives the teaching to Brahmaji, meaning, the *srishti* (Creation) made by Brahma. This is described in the third canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

There are so many kinds of birds and animals, so many kinds of *udbhija* (plants), *jaraayuja* (beings born in a sac), *andaja* (beings born in an egg), *svedaja* (beings born from perspiration) – the four kinds of beings created by Brahma. This Bhagwat-Dharma is for all four kinds. It does not restrict its benefits to only a person who gets formal initiation as is the case in Sampradayas

In the religious sect founded by a Teacher, the spiritual benefits are only for those who receive a formal initiation, and become followers of the Master who founded the religion. The Bhagwat-Dharma, however, bestows kalyan on all, irrespective of whether a person is a follower of any Sampradaya or not.

Yesterday I had told you that all beings get the benefit of the Bhagwat-Dharma. Raja Prithu made Prithivi agree to provide for all beings. Just as the earth bears and sustains all beings – whether a *paapee* (sinner) or *punyaatmaa* (a person with spiritual merit), and water quenches the thirst of all beings, fire gives heat to all, the sun gives light to all, the air gives life-sustaining breath to all, and space gives scope for movement to all – it is the *dharma* (intrinsic nature) of the Tattva to nurture all beings without differentiating between an individual and a group.

In the same way, the *vastu* (object) described in the Shrimad Bhagwat is the Tattva. It is not of any individual, group, or religious sect. People who are obsessed with a State, country, or religious sect or community are unable to understand the magnanimous viewpoint of the Shrimad Bhagwat. The fact is it has a holistic approach.

Tatra tatraanjasaayushman bhavataa yadvinishchitam,

punsaame`kaantatah shre`yastannah shansitumarhasi.

Praye`naalpaayushah sabhya kalaavasmin yuge`janaah,

mandaah sumandamatayo mandabhaagyaa hyupadrutaah.

Bhooreeni bhoorikarmaani shrotavyaani vibhaagashah.

(1. 1. 9 – 11)

People expect the viewpoint of Dharma to be restricted. They think about Dharma from the viewpoint of individual *sukha* (happiness) and kalyan. They say that a person who does *naama-japa* (chanting Bhagwan's name) will get kalyan; a person who does *dhyana* (meditation) will get kalyan, a person who attains Samadhi will get kalyan, etc. This is how the *dharmaatmaa* (people who adhere to the rules of instituted religion) used to think about Dharma earlier. Such people will be surprised to see that the Shrimad Bhagwat's point of view is not restricted to the *vyakti* (individual), *jaati* (group; community), *sampradaaya* (religious sect), any State or country. It is for the entire human race that this point is raised.

What is the purport of all the Shastras? The condition of the people in this Yuga (eon of time) is very strange.

Praaye`naalpaayushah sabhya kalaavasmin yuge`janaah,

People in this Yuga (the Kali Yuga) are short-lived.

Manfaaha sumandamatayo mandabhaayaa hyupadrutah.

(1. 1. 10)

They are very lazy. Their life has become indolent and luxury-loving. They are disinclined to work hard. They want to obtain the benefits of other people's hard work.

All right, they may be lazy, but a lazy person with a sharp intellect can motivate others to work for him.

However, *manda matayo* – the *buddhi* (intellect) is *manda* (dim). Nor are they lucky – *manda bhaagyaah*. Very well; even if they don't have a good *bhaagya* (destiny created by actions of the previous birth), it would be something if they had a pure *antahkarana* (fourfold mind or subtle body, composed of the *mana* = emotional mind, *buddhi* = intellect, *chitta* = mental inclinations and *ahankaara* = subtle pride of individuality), but they are *hyupadrutaah* – trapped in the grip of mental impurities like *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion).

The Bhagwat-Dharma's activity is for all beings, including humans. That means, every human being is an *adhikaaree* (eligible person) and can avail of the benefits.

Regarding this, a friend of mine says that the Shrimad Bhagwat has created a revolution!

What revolution has it created?

The earlier *vyavasthaa* (arrangement; system) was:

Streeshoodradvijabandhunaam trayee na shrutigocharaa

(1. 4. 25)

Stree (women), *shoodra* (lowest social class), and a Brahmin who had not had the sacred thread ceremony are not permitted to study or even listen to discourses on the Vedas.

Compassion awoke in the heart of Vyasaji Maharaj. He said, 'Very well; you keep the Vedas secure in your house. I will make them available for all.'

Mahaabhaaratavyapade'she`na hyaamnaayaarthashcha darshitah,

Drishyate` yatra dharmaadi streeshoodraadibhirapyuta.

(1. 4. 29)

He wrote the Mahabharata, revealing the meaning of all the Vedas in it. This means, nobody should be deprived of the purport of the Vedas. People may be

kept away from the external form of the Vedas, but not be deprived of the *ve`daartha* (meaning given in the Vedas).

This was a truly magnanimous thing to do! A person does not need to learn the technical style of pronunciation and recitation, or undertake the difficulties of staying at the Guru's ashram, and yet he can obtain the quintessence of the Vedas without violating the stipulations of the Shastras.

Vyasaji Maharaj showered Grace and presented the meaning of the Vedas for all. It is like not having to earn wealth, or guard it, but the treasure becomes rightfully yours! You possess the key.

This is how Vyasaji Maharaj let the Vedas remain on one hand, and on the other hand he made their meaning available for everybody. In spite of this, his work was not complete, because the descriptions of *sakama karma* (actions or rituals motivated by worldly considerations) are given extensively in the Vedas. This is the reason they are given extensively in the Mahabharata as well. Devarshi Narad reproached Vyasaji for this. This is stated in the Bhagwat.

That means the meaning, the study of the Vedas, the *svara* (intonation), *paatha* (recitation), and *prashaakhaa* (branches and smaller sections) were put on one side, and the meaning of all the Vedas was revealed in the Mahabharata for everybody – including women and Shudras.

However, there are some episodes in the Mahabharata where *nishkaama karma* (actions or rituals not motivated by worldly considerations) are discussed. The Bhagwat Gita, Sanatsujatiya, Anugita, Shanti Parva etc come in this category. The rest are dominated by *sakama karmas*. This is why Naradji reproached Vyasaji.

*Jugupsitam dharmakrite`anushaasatah svabhaavaraktasya mahaan vyatikramah,
yadvaakyato dharma iteetarah sthito na manyate` tasya nivaarnam janah.*

(1. 5. 15)

‘Vyasji! You have made one mistake in the Mahabharata.’

This is described in the Bhagwat.

‘In order to protect Dharma you gave the ruling of Karmas (rituals) that are sakama and promote *hinsaa* (violence; slaughter).’

The Mahabharata expounds the *shaanta rasa* (feeling of peace) and emphasizes *nerve`da* (disregard for worldly objects) repeatedly. A person who reads it from the beginning to the end will get the feeling that wealth, women and kingdoms become causes for quarreling between brothers, resulting in destruction. So, a wise person should not indulge in gambling or undertake such extensive strife for wealth, women or realm.

At the end, even Yudhishtira had to lament. He was filled with anguish. When he lost all interest in worldly possessions – when he got *vairagya* (detachment) – he obtained the Shanta rasa.

The Valmiki Ramayana is an epic dominated by the *karuna rasa* (the feeling of pathos). It is a historical work in poetry form. Similarly, the Mahabharata is also a great poetic work, but it is dominated by the Shanta rasa. Even so, when we reflect upon it we see that it is filled with *kaamanaa* (avid desire).

Naradji tells Vyasaji:

Jugupsitam dharmakrite`anushaasatah.

(1. 5. 15)

You have given the ruling for despicable things for the sake of (instituted) Dharma, because the people of this world are naturally inclined towards wealth and sensual pleasures.

Svabhaavaraktasya mahaan vyatikramah.

(1. 5. 15)

Today people believe that they will obtain worldly benefits by doing Dharma and Bhakti. They consider *artha* (material wealth) and *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) to be the primary objects in life. This has become a great *vyatikrama* (misfortune), because Dharma and *adharma* (that, which is contrary to Dharma) are judged according to your statements. People in general do not understand the

quintessence of Dharma-adharma. They accept your words and consider *akaamataa* (being free of worldly desires) to be Dharma – ‘*na manyate` tasya nivaaranam janah.*’ They refuse to accept any explanation about this being stated in another context.

The Poorva Mimansa philosophy describes being free of worldly desires as the ruling for the *sannyasi* (Monks who have renounced the world). *Tyaaga* (renouncing) is stipulated for a Sanyasi. People who are not fit for the Grihastha Ashram (stage of life of a married householder) – the blind, physically impaired, incapable of bearing children, etc – are to renounce a worldly life and accept Sanyas. A normal person should stay with Artha and Kama (fulfillment of righteous worldly desires) – ‘*yaavad jeevam agnihotram juhuyaat*’. For the general public, the *shruti* (verses of the Vedas) says: *apaamusomam amrita-adhooma*’ – work here and you will get the fruit in Swarga (heaven), is the primary teaching.

The purport of the Shastras (ancient books on religion) is that people should not give paramount importance to artha and bhoga. They should experience the param Satya in their life, follow the Bhagwat-Dharma, and become *nishkaama* (free of worldly desires) – *na manyate` tasya nivaaranam janah.* Now, it is said:

Pareekshya lokaan karmachyootaan braahmano nirve`damaayaat.

(After testing the whole world and seen the results of all actions, which are perishable, wise people get dispassion.)

However, when we give an explanation of this Shruti people refuse to accept it. They say, ‘All this is for the *anadhikaaree* (ineligible people). *Tattvamasi* (Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is. You, the Atma, are the Brahman) and other Mahavakya (grand statements of the Vedas) are merely *stuti-vaakya* (statements that eulogize). Humans should do *sakaama* (with worldly desires) Karmas for obtaining Swarga.

That means, they want *laukika* (of this world) and *paaralaukika* (of the worlds after death) sukha and nothing else. Sukha should be *pratyaksha* (experienced through the senses) in this life and in the life after death. They want *apsaraa*

(celestial nymphs) and the *nandana-vana* (garden of the Devtas) and get *amrita* (the elixir that bestows immortality) to drink, in this world and in Swarga.

You have made people engrossed in this mentality. This life is given to us to obtain the Atma that is separate from the body; to understand that the Atma exists even after the body dies; whereas the actions done with *vaasanaa* (worldly desires) create the fruit as per the vasana.

So, I want to explain to you that firstly, the Atma is separate from the *de`ha* (body). Secondly, the Atma does not die when the body dies. Thirdly, the fruit of an action depends on the desire with which the action is done. Fourthly, I want to explain that the *nirnaya* (decision; conclusion) of the purpose of the Shrutis should be reached.

No matter how much we explain, when a person develops a strong attachment to artha and bhoga, he cannot let go of them even if he tries. Therefore, Vyasaji, create a *grantha* (book) that describes the glory of Bhagwan's *leelaa* (frolic; sport) so that the feeling of Bhakti rises in the heart of people.

Samaadhinaanusmara tadviche`shtitam.'

(1. 5. 13)

What I am telling you is that there is something extra special in the Bhagwat, over and above what is given in other ancient Shastras. Other Puranas focus on Vishnu, Devi, Ganesh, Shiva etc, whereas the focus of the Shrimad Bhagwat is the Satya. Other Puranas describe a particular form of the Ishwara. That makes their Sampradaya predominant. In the Bhagwat the predominant factor is '*Satyam parama dheemahi*'. No Sampradaya is predominant here.

The Upanishads (the portion of the Veda that propounds pure Gnan) describe the *vastu* (object; the Atma that is not separate from the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) with the predominance of the *chit-tattva* (the element of pure consciousness), because the Gnan of the *sattva* (pure existence) is the principle subject.

The Mahabharata describes the vastu with the predominance of the Sat Tattva (pure existence). The *niroopana* (definition) of *karma* (rituals), *kaarmaashraya dravya* (items necessary for the ritual), *saddravya* (pure materials like milk, ghee, etc) and the Sat Tattva itself are predominant. The Shrimad Bhagwat defines Satya with an emphasis on *rasa* (the sweet emotion of love for Shri Krishna who is Satya incarnate) and *aananda* (pure bliss).

Satya is *gnaanaatmaka* (containing Gnan). Satya is *aanandaatmaka* (containing anand). Satya itself is Satya. We have to say that Satya is Gnan to clarify that it is not *jada* (inert), and we have to say that it is anand to clarify that it is not *dukha* (sorrow). We have to call it the Satya to clarify that it is not *kshanika* (transient).

Satyam gnaanaamanantam brahma.

(Satya is infinite Gnan; it is the Brahman.)

Satya exists, but it is not jada. We have to call it Gnan to cut away *jadataa* (being inert). Satya is our *parama pre`maaspada* (most loved) Atma.

I will tell you another point about the other object that the Bhagwat does not disdain. An absolutely clear decision is given regarding to what extent bhoga should be accepted, and to what extent Dharma should be followed.

*Dharmasya hyapavargasya naartho artha ayopakalpate`
naarthasya dharmikaantasya kaamo laabhaaya hi smritah.*

*Kaamasya ne`ndriyapreetir laabho jeeve`ta yaavataa,
jeevasya tattvajignaasaa naartho yashche`ha karmabhih.*

*Vadanti tattvavidastattvam yagnaanamadvayam,
brahme`ti paramaatme`ti bhagavaaniti shabdyate`.*

(1. 2. 9 – 11)

‘The *vidhaana* (constitution; ruling) of Dharma in our life is not for artha. We should do lots of Dharma; let people get impressed that we are great

dharmatmas, that we are very trustworthy, so that wealth comes to us.’ This should not be the mentality when we do an *anushtana* (ritual) of Dharma. The purpose of rituals is to make us free of the bondage in our life, to liberate us from worldly fetters.

The fruit of Dharma is not *artha-bandhana* (to be tied to wealth); it is *svaatantrya* (to be free of bondage). No person can be truly happy unless he is free.

Dharma is for *apavarga* (release from suffering) – *apavarjanam apavargah* – the Satya Tattva, the *sarvaadhishtana* (substratum of everything), *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent), *sarvaavabhaasaka* (the illuminator of everything), *pratyakchaitanyaabhinna* (not separate from the consciousness within) Brahman needs to be experienced directly and personally. The purpose of Dharma is to remove worldly bondage caused by *avidyaa* (nescience; believing the world to be an eternal Satya), in order to obtain the experience of this Satya Tattva.

The exposition of wealth is not to become proud of possessing it. The Shrimad Bhagwat describes the entire *srishti* (creation) as being *bhaagavata* (connected to Bhagwan). It is Bhagwan’s offspring. This beautiful episode is given in the seventh canto.

Sareesripkhagamakshikaah. Aatmanah putravat pashye`t taire`shaamantaram kiyat.

(7. 14. 9.)

All creation is created from Bhagwan, and all the wealth in it belongs to Him – *divyam bhaumam chaantariksham vittamachyutanirmitam* – everything that exists, all matter, and all beings belong to Bhagwan.

What should a human being do while enjoying the objects of the world?

A human being should not be misled into thinking that he is the owner of the objects he enjoys.

Yaavad bhriye`ta jatharam taavat svatvam hi de`hinaam,

adhikam yoabhimanye`ta sa ste`no dandamarhati.

(7. 14. 8)

A human being has a right over only that, which he puts into his stomach. He is a Trustee of everything else in his possession. 'All my possessions are for the good of all, for helping all. They are not my personal property.'

Adhikam yoabhimanye`ta sa ste`no dandamarhati – a person who has vanity about his possessions is a *ste`na* – a thief! He deserves to be punished!

This is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat. That means, believe that your wealth actually belongs to Bhagwan, not to you.

After that, the Bhagwat tells us about the wife, son, and other family members.

Yad vadanti yad ichhanti chaanumode`ta nirmamah.

(17. 14. 6.)

Whatever the others say or wish for should be understood and given approval.

You should not become adamant about what you want, else it will lead to dukha. People want things to be done as per their wish. They want others to do the work for them. This is absolutely wrong. The Guru wants the disciple to do things according to his (the Guru's) *sankalpa* (mental resolve). The mother and father want the son and daughter-in-law to do things in accordance to their *sankalpa*. However, this can never happen.

Narayana! Why can this never happen?

It is because the *mana* (emotional mind) of all is separate. Every *mana* has different *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions). All move forward in the grip of their own *vaasanaa* (strong desires) of time immemorial. When we want the *mana* of another to move according to our *mana*, it does not comply, and we become *dukhi*. We become even more *dukhi* if we do *aagraha* (insist forcefully).

Yad vadanti yad ichhanti chaanumode`ta nirmama.

Why do you consider these people to belong to you?

If they give their opinion you say, 'Yes, that is true.' A difference in age, beliefs, and inclinations is between them and you. Accept the difference. The Bhagwat goes to the extent of saying, '*Apye`kaama aatmaano daaraam nrinaam svatva graho yatah*' (7. 14. 11). You should allow even your wife to get involved in doing *se`vaa* (serving others), because a man has great *mamataa* (possessive attachment) for his wife.

*Jahyaad yadarthe` svapraan hanyaad vaa pitaram gurum,
tasyaam svatvam striyaam jahyaad yaste`na hyajito jitah.*

(7. 14. 12.)

A man goes to the extent of giving up his life for the wife he loves. He kills his mother and father and even his Guru for her sake. A man who does not have *mamata* for his wife, who considers her to belong to the Ishwara, has won over the *ajita* (unconquerable) Paramatma. That means he will get shanti. He will get liberation.

What I mean to say is that the viewpoint of the Shrimad Bhagwat is unique! The common Smritis (memories of revealed knowledge) like the Manu Smriti, Yagyavalkya Smriti, Parashara Smriti etc have described Dharma in a way that is very different from the way the Bhagwat describes it. I mentioned this episode only to clarify this point.

The Bhagwat gives directions about how wealth should be divided. This comes in a section called the Shukra Neeti and Bali Neeti. The method of Prithu and Ambarish is different. I will tell you more about this in due course. At present I am telling you about the episode that comes at the beginning of the Bhagwat.

The bhagavat ladies.

An extraordinary scene is given in the first canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat. Ashwatthama has killed the five sons of Draupadi. They were no ordinary boys. Ashwatthama killed them when they were sound asleep. Just imagine a lump of flesh that continues to live without the function of his ears, eyes, nose, tongue, and skin! All five senses are incapacitated. Draupadi's five sons were born of the

five Pandavas. Ashwatthama did not kill them in battle; he killed them while they slept. What a tragic scene! Can you imagine Draupadi's anguish?

The Mahabharata war was over. All five sons of Draupadi were sleeping in the camp. Ashwatthama went in and cut off their heads. He took the heads to his Master, Duryodha. 'I have destroyed the Pandavas,' he announced proudly.

Even though the Mahabharata does not mention this, I will tell you what I heard Mahatmas speak about this episode when I was a child. Duryodhan asked Ashwatthama, 'What have you brought? Show me.'

'I have brought the heads of Yudhishtira, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakul and Sahdev,' replied Ashwatthama.

'Just bring the heads,' commanded Duryodhan. 'I want to see them.' The heads were in a cloth bag. Duryodhan pressed on a head. It got squashed. 'These cannot be the Pandavas' heads,' he declared. 'You have made some mistake.' Then they discovered that what had happened was that the entire lineage of the Pandava-Kauravas was destroyed by Ashwatthama's act.

Arjuna was beside himself with anger. He went with Shri Krishna and caught Ashwatthama. Both used the *brahmastra*. The Brahmastra is such a deadly missile that nothing can withstand it.

Just as *brahmagnaana* (Gnan about the Brahman; enlightenment) leaves not even a residue of *dvaita* (duality), the Brahmastra doesn't leave even a residue of the *prapancha* (external world). That is why it is called the Brahmastra. It is like Brahmagnan destroying avidya.

Ultimately, Arjuna captured Ashwatthama and took him to Draupadi, tied up like a criminal. This is where the *roopa* (beauty) of the Bhagwat-Dharma is seen! Shri Krishna told Arjuna to kill Ashwatthama. Bheemasen told Arjuna to kill Ashwatthama. However, Draupadi – whose five sons had been killed by him – could not bear the sight of Ashwatthama tied up with ropes.

'Asahantyasya bandhanaanayanam'

(1. 7. 43)

The sight of Ashwatthama tied up like this distressed Draupadi. '*Muchyataam muchyataam e`sha* – leave him! Set him free!' She cried. What is the indication of saying this twice? Shri Vallabhacharya has said that the purport of Draupadi saying 'release him' twice is that her decision is firm. There is no doubt in her mind that he should be set free.

Bheemasen ran towards Arjuna urging him to kill Ashwatthama and Draupadi ran towards Arjuna urging him to release Ashwatthama. Shri Krishna averted a tussle by assuming His four-armed form. He caught Bheemasen with two hands and Draupadi with two hands, and drew them apart.

Just picture the scene! In spite of her five sons being killed – resulting in the destruction of the lineage – Draupadi says, 'I don't want Ashwatthama's mother to suffer as I am suffering. *Maa rodeedasya jananee yathaaham.*' (1. 7. 47)

What tremendous mercy for such a terrible offender, and what tremendous sympathy for Ashwatthama's mother Draupadi's heart has! Seeing this it seems that this is where the first effulgence of the Bhagwat-Dharma is seen. Shri Sukadevji Maharaj has pointed out six *guna* (virtues) in Draupadi's words.

Dharme` nyaayyam sakarunam nirvyaleekam samam mahat. (1. 7. 49)

1. *Dharmaanukoola* (in keeping with Dharma).
2. *Nyaaya* (in keeping with justice).
3. *Karunaa* (compassion).
4. *Nishkapatataa* (absence of guile).
5. *Sama* (equanimity of outlook).
6. *Udaarataa* (magnanimity).

From whose mouth does this speech emerge? It emerges from the mouth of Draupadi, whose five sleeping sons have been killed mercilessly, by the man before her. Draupadi's heart has no feeling of hardness, even for him! She feels sympathy for his mother, should he be killed. For a moment she forgets her own anguish.

Shri Krishna said, 'Sadhu! Sadhu!' (An exclamation of approbation). Yudhishtira said 'Sadhu! Sadhu! If a person has a heart, it should be like Draupadi's!'

The fact is Bhagwan abides in Draupadi's heart.

Draupadi said, 'My sons were not thinking of You, Shri Krishna. They were not uttering Your name when they died. They were not immersed in Your bhakti. They were killed while they slept; killed by a Brahmin! I fear that they will get *durgati* (attain a low level of existence).'

Shri Krishna said, 'No. When they were unaware of Me, I was aware of them. I am eager to grant them kalyan.'

The episode of Draupadi is given to show the caliber of the people of the lineage in which Parikshit was born.

The second episode is that of Uttara (the pregnant widow of Arjuna's son Abhimanyu who was killed treacherously in battle). The same Ashwatthama used the Brahmastra on Uttara's unborn baby in the womb. This was the height of cruelty and injustice! On the one hand the height of dastardly behavior and on the other hand Bhagwan's *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) is seen in this episode.

Uttara comes running to Bhagwan Shri Krishna. 'Let me die, but save my son – *maa me` garbho nipaatyataam (1. 8. 10)*' she prays. Uttara did not ask Bhagwan to kill Ashwatthama, catch him and punish him for this horrendous act. She says, 'Let me die, but save the sole scion of the Pandava-Kaurava lineage, who is in my womb.' Her whole attention is on her unborn baby. She gives no thought to whether Ashwatthama lives or not.

Who does Bhagwan Shri Krishna protect? You know the answer. Bhagwan Shri Krishna is the *vishvaatmaa* – the Atma of the world. Uttara said, 'Don't let my unborn child be destroyed.' Shri Krishna said, 'Uttara, don't worry about your baby. I am protecting him.'

This is the meaning of the word Bhagwat-Dharma!

Anjah punsaamavidushaam viddhi bhaagavataan hi taan.

(11. 2. 34)

Bhagwan gives the simplest method even to those who don't have Gnan. This method is called the Bhagwat-Dharma.

When Draupadi's sons died, were they immersed in Bhagwan's bhakti? Were they in a state of Samadhi? Had they reached a state of deep meditation after doing *yama-niyama-praanaayaama* (the first steps of the eight steps of Yoga)? Had they obtained Tattvagnan?

No. they were in a deep slumber. Bhagwan has karuna for even those who are in a heavy slumber. This compassion of His is called the Bhagwat-Dharma. Bhagwan Himself protects them. The baby in the womb was utterly helpless. He did not know what made his limbs burn. His mother called out for him to be protected. Bhagwan entered her womb and protected him.

It will be explained in the Shrimad Bhagwat how Bhagwan showers His shakti, buddhi, *pushti* (nurturing), *pre`ma* (love), and bhakti on people. The principal meaning of the Bhagwat-Dharma is that Bhagwan's compassion works when human efforts are of no avail. We should never lose hope.

The Valmiki Ramayana contains a dialogue between a *reeksha* (bear) and a *vyaaghra* (tiger). Shri Rama had won the war. He had killed Ravana and conquered Lanka. Hanumanji went to bring Sitaji. After giving her the news that all was well with Shri Rama and His Army, Hanumanji said, 'These *raakshasee* (demonesses) have made you suffer. If you give me the command I will crush some of them underfoot, scratch some with my nails, bite some and beat some, to punish them.'

Sitaji narrated the dialogue between the bear and the tiger to Hanumanji.

A man had wandered into a forest. He was chased by a tiger. He climbed up onto a tree to save himself. A bear was sitting on the tree. When night came the tiger settled at the foot of the tree, knowing the man would have to come down sooner or later. The man was trapped between the bear and the tiger.

The bear gave *sharana* (refuge) to the man. He made friends with the man. ‘Put your head on my lap and go to sleep’, he said. ‘We will sleep turn by turn. I will wake you when it is my turn to sleep,’ he told the man.

When the man fell asleep with his head on the bear’s lap, the tiger told the bear, ‘Men are absolutely untrustworthy. You have given him your friendship, but he will betray you. Push him down and save yourself.’

‘No,’ said the bear. ‘I will not push him down. He has trusted me.’

However, when it was the turn of the bear to sleep with his head on the man’s lap, the man succumbed to the tiger’s cajoling and pushed the bear down. The bear fell, but managed to catch hold of a branch and save himself. ‘Now, at least, throw the man down,’ said the tiger. ‘You saw for yourself how treacherous a creature he is!’ The bear replied, ‘Look Sir, there is no human being who does not have some weakness or other.’

Paapaanaam vaa shubhaanaam vaa vadhaarhonaamapi kvachit,

kaaryam kaarunyamaarye`na na kashchid naaparaadhyati.

In this world there are many great *paapee* (sinners) and many great *punyaatmaa* (people with spiritual merit). There are people who are fit to be killed. But the Dharma of a *manushya* (human) – the Dharma of an *aarya* (noble person with refinement) is to show compassion under all circumstances. Karuna flows from our side; it does not sprout in others.’

Who is there in this world, who has never done an *aparaadha* (offence; something wrong)?

Janakiji (Sitaji) narrated this dialogue to Hanumanji. ‘What blame are we to put on the rakshasis?’ she asked. ‘These poor women are the servants of Ravana. When they find out that Ravana is dead they will serve me. Let them go to Ayodhya with us. Treat them respectfully. Whatever they did was out of helplessness.’

To have such compassion for even the women who made her suffer, and to say that nobody exists who is completely free of faults! You should know that the

Valmiki Ramayana is older than the Bible. Who, in this world, is not a thief? 'Let the first stone be thrown by a person who has never stolen anything.' Compare this sentence with the words in Valmiki Ramayana. 'There is no one who has not done something wrong.'

The episodes of Draupadi and Uttara given in the first canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat reveal their lofty outlooks. Both ladies have compassion for the men who killed – or tried to kill – their sons.

The disposition of the Shrimad Bhagwat is compassion. If you make the effort to read it attentively, you will observe that Narayana narrated the Bhagwat out of compassion to Brahmaji. Brahmaji narrated it out of compassion to Naradji. Naradji narrated it out of compassion to Vyasaji, who narrated it to Shukadevji and others, also out of compassion. Shukadevji narrated the Shrimad Bhagwat to Raja Parikshit out of compassion.

This is why the point that all should be allowed to live on this earth, is given in the very first canto. The Bhagwat-Dharma does not destroy anybody's existence. So much so that Kali Yuga (the present eon called Kali, when wickedness thrives) is also allowed to come into existence.

Kali was inflicting great suffering on Dharma (eternal righteousness). Dharma is represented by a *vrishabha* (bull). Kali, in the garb of a King, had broken three of his legs. Only one leg supported his weight.

The poor cow (who represents the earth, Prithivi) was starving, which means that the earth was milked mercilessly. Kali Yuga wore the robes of a King. He was kicking Prithivi and Dharma. This was the situation.

The proper action would have been for Raja Parikshit to destroy Kali Yuga. He should not allow Kali Yuga exist. Raja Parikshit, however, is a *bhaagavata* (connected to Bhagwan). He understands the importance of the *kaala-dharma* (what is right for which age). When Kali Yuga surrendered to Raja Parikshit, begging for mercy, he relented. 'All right, my brother, you may remain, because there is some *guna* (good quality) even in you.'

The opinion of the Shrimad Bhagwat is that there is no person and no substance that does not have some or another competence. We should learn to make use of the competence, not disdain or destroy it.

Saaranga iva saarabhuk, saarangah pashupakshinah.

Just as a swan separates the substance in the milk, discarding the water content in it; just as a bee sips the nectar in the flower, ignoring the *dosha* (fault; bad quality), we should focus on the gunas of people. The word *saaranga* has many meanings. It can refer to a swan or a bee or a deer. In one sense it also refers to a bhakta.

Raja Parikshit told Kali Yuga, ‘During your tenure people will get kalyan by just uttering Bhagwan’s name.’ Raja Parikshit thought, ‘Kali Yuga should not be killed – *na mayaa maaraniyoayam*’. This Dharma of compassion is present in Parikshit’s heart.

How wonderful this is – Vyasaji Maharaj is pondering upon the fact that people are becoming weakened. He is thinking about the sukha-dukha of the world. You must not think that the people of yore were not aware of the state of the world. On the one hand there is compassion for Kali Yuga, and on the other hand there is the extraordinary *leelaa* (frolic; play) of Raja Parikshit!

When Raja Parikshit was told that a *Rishi-kumaara* (a young ascetic) had given him a *shaapa* (curse), ‘he will die in seven days,’ he felt no fear.

Why was that?

Raja Parikshit wanted no bhoga for himself; neither in this world nor in Swarga. He wanted only to be established in the *bhagvat-tattva* (the essence or true form of Bhagwan). If you want to see the *samagrataa* (entirety) of the Bhagwat-Dharma, of *shravana* (listening to and absorbing the purport of spiritual discourses), of *manana* (meditating on them), and *nididhyaasana* (bringing the mind back repeatedly to them), and of *dhyana* (meditation), it is found in Raja Parikshit. This Bhagwat-Dharma has manifested to loosen the grip of those who only clutch their own selfish interests.

This is given in the original *shloka* (verses) of the Bhagwat: Raja Parikshit said, 'The shaap given by the Brahmin boy is not a shaap; it is an *anugraha* (Grace; compassion) that he has bestowed on me. My death will not take place because of his shaap. His words merely foretell what is to be. He has shown compassion by warning me that I should be prepared to leave my body in seven days. I was not to die by his shaap; I was to die. It was my *pramaada* (oversight; negligence) that I forgot to prepare for death. His giving me the information is a great benefit. I will become completely engrossed in meditating on Bhagwan, and complete all the necessary arrangements.' This is the characteristic of a *bhagavat-purusha* (a person connected to Bhagwan).

The Bhagwat-Dharma keeps us *sukhi* (happy) in every situation that comes in life. It does not allow us to go into *dukha*. This point has been introduced from the first canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat. Whether it is wealth or problems – whether it is *sukha* or *dukha* from the worldly viewpoint – if the *mana* (emotional mind) of the person remains immersed in Bhagwan, in *poornataa* (the totality), is attached to Bhagwan, he does not succumb to pride of wealth or *sukha*. In times of sorrow he feels no sense of being impoverished or despondent.

It is also seen that people have faced great sorrow, but a person who lives according to the Bhagwat-Dharma does not get immersed in grief or worry. Situations cannot be stopped from coming, but a person can mould his *mana* so that he remains serene in all circumstances. There are two or three remarkable episodes in the first canto.

One is on the occasion of Yudhishtira's Kingdom. There is a description of his immense wealth, his magnificent brothers, rituals of Dharma like Yagnas and Yaags, all the pleasures of *loka-paraloka* (this world and other worlds). He was *sukhi*. The question here is: was Raja Yudhishtira *sukhi* because of his worldly blessings? The Shrimad Bhagwat states that in spite of having all this Yudhishtira did not feel that he was *sukhi*.

Adhijahrurmudam raagnah kshudhitasya yathe`tare`.

(1. 12. 6)

No matter how great his wealth, a person who is hungry and thirsty feels no pleasure in it. All his power, Kingdom, brothers, and Army give no pleasure. He feels happy only when he gets food to eat and water to drink. Just as a person needs food when he is hungry, and water when he is thirsty, Raja Yudhishtira needed the Ishwara in his life. He had a thirst for Shri Krishna. He had a hunger for Shri Krishna. Not a moment passed when Shri Krishna was not in his thoughts. The objects of the world were not a cause of *sukha* for him.

There is an amazing episode when Shri Krishna is about to leave Indraprastha (the Capitol of the Pandava's Kingdom) and return to Dwarka. Kunti (the mother of the Padavas) comes and eulogizes Shri Krishna.

Do you know what *varadaana* (boon) Kunti asked for? Now, here is the wonderful quality of the Bhagwat-Dharma! People are ready to die for *aishvarya* (dominion) and wealth, but Kunti says,

*Vipadah santu nah shashvattatra tatra jagadguro,
bhavato darshanam yatsyaadapunarbhavadarshanam.*

(1. 8. 25)

'O Sadguru Shri Krishna! Let *vipada* (misfortunes) come repeatedly into our life.'

Shri Krishna said, '*Buaji* (Aunty), why do you want reversals in life? Nobody in this world wants dukha!'

Kunti replied:

Bhavato darshanam yatsyaad apunarbhava darshanam.

'Whenever misfortune comes into our life, You come to protect us. When we were to be burnt in the house of wax, when my son was given poison, when my daughter-in-law was being publicly disrobed, and in every adverse situation, You came to save us. Your presence makes the misfortune more valuable than worldly wealth.'

This is a very important factor in our life. It is not in the hands of any human being that his wealth remains intact. If you believe in *poorva-janama* (past births), there are some fruits of karmas done in a previous life. There is some influence of our mental state. There is no single factor that makes a person sukhi or dukhi. There is nobody in this world whose life is completely free of dukha.

The Shrimad Bhagwat goes so far as to say that the people who consider themselves to be very intelligent, saying that they will never allow dukha to come into their life – that their life will have only sukha – *Yadi praaptim vidhaatam cha*

jaananti sukhadukhayoh (11. 10. 19) – if they know the *upaaya* (method; solution) for controlling sukha-dukha and the *vidhaataa* (Brahmaji, who ordains) to ensure that only sukha – and no dukha – comes to them, then – ‘*te`apyaddhaa na viduryogam mrityurna pramave`d yathaa (11. 10. 19)* – such people don’t know the upaya for ensuring that *mrityu* (death) never comes to them.

The *vastu* (object) that comes without our wanting it, without our making any effort for it, in spite of our intense aversion for it, is called vipatti. It is called dukha. It is an adverse situation. If there is any vastu that can be with us, a treasure hoard, a protector, an invisible power that never leaves us even when we are in the most acute distress, gives us comfort, gives us peace, gives us sukha – if there can be any such vastu in the life of a human being, it is the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Kunti said: *bhavato darshanam yatsyaad apunarbhavadarshanam. (1. 8. 25)* we get Your darshan when we face misfortune.’

The fact is that nobody can snatch away the sukha-shanti of a person who has his sights on Bhagwan when problems come. This means our mana and *tana* (body) should be bound firmly with an *ananta sattaa* (infinite existence), and *akhanda aananda* (unbroken joyfulness) that will never leave us in misfortune or in death. The name of such a vastu is Bhagwan!

A person who has enthroned Bhagwan in his heart becomes a *bhagavata-dharmee* (one who follows the Bhagwat-Dharma). This means, it is an infallible method for dealing with all the setbacks in life and even in death that the Bhagwat-Dharma arises in our life.

Bhagavat Purusha.

Another amazing episode is given in the first canto. This is the story of Raja Parikshit’s forbearers. Draupadi is Parikshit’s grandmother. Kunti is his great grandmother. The episode of Bhishma Pitamah (the great grand uncle of the Pandavas and the Kauravas) is also amazing.

Bhishma Pitamah lay on his bed of arrows. A human being gets wounded in life, he becomes emaciated and experiences unbearable pain. It is not that Bhishma Pitamah is the only one to face suffering. It can happen to any *shareera-dhaaree* (one who has a body). Now see the special aspect of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Bhishma Pitamah is lying on a bed of arrows. You go to fairs and see fakirs lying on a bed of nails. Don't think that this is how Bhishma Pitamah must have been lying. Those who lie on a bed of nails do so with great cleverness and skill. People don't know about the trickery behind it.

Bhishma Pitamah had faced so many arrows that had pierced his entire body and gone through his body. He went on fighting until their weight made him topple on his back. He lay suspended on the arrows, with the arrowheads in the ground. A boon had been granted to Bhishma Pitamah that death would come to him only when he wanted to die. The wish to die had not yet risen in him.

It is said that Bhishma Pitamah's head was hanging. He asked for a pillow. Duryodhan was called. Karna was called. Many soft pillows were brought for him. Bhishma Pitamah rejected them all. He summoned Arjuna. 'I want a pillow,' he said. Arjuna shot an arrow in such a way that it supported Bhishma Pitamah's head. Such a valiant warrior was the grand uncle of the two clans! The Mahabharata war describes what he did on his *shara-shaiyaa* (bed of arrows) with great clarity. The Bhagwat gives only an indication.

Raja Yudhishtira went to Bhagwan Shri Krishna early one morning. Shri Krishna was sitting on His bed, meditating. Yudhishtira bowed down to Shri Krishna. 'Prabhu, what were You doing?' he asked. Shri Krishna said, 'I was doing dhyana.' 'Whose dhyana do You do, Bhagwan?' asked Yudhishtira. 'I was doing dhyana of Bhishma Pitamah,' replied Shri Krishna.

Just as a bhakta does dhyana of Bhagwan, Bhagwan also does dhyana of His bhaktas in exactly the same way. Shri Krishna also sheds tears for His bhaktas. His body tingles with love for His bhaktas. His throat would get choked with emotion, and His heart would melt with love. The fact is it is the Bhagwat-Dharma that

prompts all the *divya* (divine) qualities and *sadguna* (virtues) that are hidden in humans to manifest.

When a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) becomes immersed in Bhagwan's dhyana, Bhagwan also becomes immersed in the dhyana of His bhakta. This is something that is eminently suitable for you to experience in your life. No matter how deep is the dukha in your heart – even at this very moment, as I talk – it may be the dukha of a bitter defeat, some domestic strife, money matters, fear of death, or anything else, do dhyana for one minute. Break off your relationship with the world and attach your mana to a divine world. See Shri Krishna in your mind's eye. He is standing in your heart with a flute at His lips, smiling lovingly at you. He is wearing a *peetaambara* (yellow stole). He has a beautiful blue-hued form. Just focus on this image for one minute. I tell you this with full confidence: if you do this dhyana for one minute your mana will be free of dukha for that one minute.

When you know the method of driving away your dukha for one minute, you can use it to drive dukha away for five minutes or five hours. Apply your mana to thinking about Bhagwan. If *vairagya* (detachment) is lacking in your mana, and you do the *japa* (ritual chanting) of *ne`ti-ne`ti* (not this – not this, negating everything until only the Atma remains) a hundred thousand times, it will not drive dukha away. I know the quintessence of Advaita Vedanta!

I say this openly in public that neti-neti is not a *mantra* (group of words with subtle power). It is not a play of magic. It is only when the world we see is negated in a heart that is no longer attached to worldly matters that the person becomes free of dukha by the Gnan of the Tattva of the Brahman, which is a direct personal experience.

However, take the name of Shri Krishna for five minutes. Take Bhagwan's name. Do His *smarana* (think about Him). If there is any substance that has the capacity to bring a change in your heart, to throw out the external world that fills your mind, it is the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Vipado naiva vipadah sampado naiva sampadah,

vipad vismarana vishnoh sampanna naaraayana smriti.

‘Vipad, meaning *vipatti* (misfortune) is not the name of *vipatti*; and *sampatti* (prosperity) is not the name of *sampatti*. Yudhishtira, come with Me and learn from Bhishma Pitamah. Learn about the *sarva-vyaapee* (all-pervading), *sarvakaarya-kaarana* (the cause of all the objects in the world that are the effect), the *abhinna-nimitta-upaadaana kaarana* (the cause that is the substance as well as the instrumental factor) of this world, the *bhagavat-drishti* (viewpoint connected to Bhagwan), Gnan about Dharma, *upaasanaa* (loving worship), *vyavahaara* (right behavior), *raajaneeti* (statesmanship), and Brahmagnan. No one else in this world has as much Gnan about all these as Bhishma Pitamah.’

My purpose is not to talk about *gnaana-vignaana* (knowledge – acquired knowledge). What I want to say is that Yudhishtira went with Shri Krishna to Pitamah, and learnt about the different parts of the antahkarana, and which is the Dharma (correct behavior) best suited for people whose antahkarana is influenced by different strong urges.

I am telling you the *shaashvata* (eternal) principle of *dharmaanusuthaana* (Vedic rituals). The difference in the ritual should not be because of different Acharyas (Teachers). I am telling you the *shaashvata-siddhaanata* (eternal principle) of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The difference in Dharma should not be because of the eligibility of the antahkarana of the person doing the ritual – this is called *adhikaaree bhe`da* (the difference in eligibility) in the Veda-Shastras.

Vairaagyaraagopaadhibhyaamaamnaalobhayalakshanaan.

(1. 9. 26)

It is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that there is a different kind of Dharma for a person who has *vairaagya* (detachment) in his antahkarana, and a different kind for a person who has *raaga* (worldly attachments). When *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress) is done according to the state of the antahkarana, it bears fruit

much faster. There are some sadhans that give success in an instant, provided they are matched perfectly with the antahkarana of an eligible person.

Those who consider *dravya* (material objects) to be sadhan are never successful; nor are those who consider mere actions to be sadhan. Those who believe their *manobhaava* (the feeling in their heart) to be sadhan find that their feelings undergo changes. External actions have no importance. Objects by themselves have no value in the field of *adhyaatma* (spirituality). Under the circumstances it is necessary to understand the *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions) of the individual's antahkarana and the kind of desires he has, meaning, what does the person actually want? What are his assets? What is his capacity?

Arthee samarthee vidvaana shaashtre`na aparyudastaat.

The adhikari should have the desire – does he have a true desire to obtain the Ishwara? And, if it is indeed the Ishwara he desires to obtain, does he have the *saamarthy* (capability) to experience the Ishwara? Do the *vritti* (mental inclinations) of his antahkarana have the ripeness needed for experiencing the Ishwara? And, does he comprehend the things he is told? Is there any possibility of his being a *nishiddha* (prohibited) adhikari? All these points are to be kept in mind before a person is given the *upade`sha* (teaching) of Dharma.

It is described that when Shri Krishna went and stood before Bhishma Pitamah, Pitamah mentally did His *poojaa* (ritual worship). The *darshana* (seeing a revered person) and *sparsha* (touch) of Shri Krishna removed Bhishma Pitamah's pain completely. He completely forgot the arrows his body was pierced with, and that he lay on a bed of arrows! He obtained the *bodha* (incandescent understanding) of Realty.

'Maharaj,' he said to Shri Krishna. 'You have made many of Your bhaktas wait for You. Since *anaadi kaala* (time immemorial) countless bhaktas have waited for You to appear before them and give them Your darshan. Today –

Sa de`vade`vo bhagavaan prateekshataam kale`varam yaavadidam hinomyaham.

(1. 9. 24)

You wait for me! I am dying, but You please stand before my eyes until I die. And, how are You to wait? Your yellow stole should be fluttering in the breeze and a tender smile should be on Your lips. Your eyes should be filled with love as You look at me. You have to assume Your four-armed form, and stand here till I die.'

It is the power of the Bhagwat-Dharma that compels even Bhagwan to wait!

That means, if a bhakta cannot do Bhagwan's dhyana at the time of death, Bhagwan is to do dhyana of the bhakta. If a bhakta cannot reach Bhagwan at the time of death, Bhagwan is to come to the Bhakta. If a bhakta cannot wait with eagerness and open eyes for Bhagwan's darshan, Bhagwan is to give darshan to the bhakta. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma!

Where is there *mrityu* (death) in this? Kunti told Shri Krishna, 'For us, vipatti is sampatti, because we get Your darshan in vipatti; and there is no greater wealth than Your darshan!'

Kunti's external life is full of troubles, but Bhagwan is present within. In the same way, mrityu is present in Bhishma's external life, but there is no mrityu in his inner life. There is no vipatti. What is the *sfoorana* (energy; springing forth) in Bhishma's life?

Tamimamahamajam shareerabhaajaam hridi hridi
dhishtitamaatmakalpitaanaam,

pratidrishamiva naikadhaarkame`kam samadhigatoasmi vidhootabhe`damohah.

(1. 9. 42)

'The *ajanmaa* (unborn) who stands before me is not merely standing before my eyes. He is present as the *adviteeya* (non-dual) in all the antahkaranas that are imagined in the Paramatma. I am experiencing Him with a buddhi that is free of the concept of the existence of separate objects.'

Don't you feel that it is necessary for the life of a human being, that you obtain someone who will abide in your heart and support you in prosperity, trouble, illness, yoga (being attached to Bhagwan), *vikshe`pa* (agitation), *samaadhee* (a

state of deep meditation), *jeevana* (life), *marana* (death), *sukha* and *dukha*? A *vastu* (object) that will be with you everywhere, at all times, and in all forms? If you say you have no desire for such a *vastu*, it is like cutting off your own foot. You are removing from your life a *Satya*, an *anand*, a deep *sukha*.

I will tell you something else now. This is also from the first canto. It is the episode of the *shaap* given to Raja Parikshit. Raja Parikshit is a *bhagavat*. The Dharma he follows is wonderful. The Shrimad Bhagwat has many incidents of *shaaps*.

These days, if anyone gives a verbal abuse, criticizes somebody, or insults him, the person feels upset about it all day long. However, they reject the concept of *shaap*. ‘What *shaapa-varadaana* (curse-boon) can anyone give?’ they say with derision.

A man uttered some words into the air and went away. You allowed the words to come into your heart through the pathway of your ears, and experienced the pricking of those words in your heart all day long. This is called *shaap*. *Shaap* is nothing else.

A man spoke ill of you. He abused you and went off. He said something that made you feel insulted. He went off and enjoyed his food and drink. He laughed and enjoyed chatting with his friends.

And you? You sat alone, feeling agitated at the way he behaved. Wasn’t that the effect of his *shaap*? It is because he does not have much spiritual power that his *shaap* makes you *dukhi* for only a short time. The *shaap* of a *tapasvee* (ascetic) *Mahapurusha* is effective for a long time. It also becomes *Satya* (comes true). It is the same with their *nindaa* (criticism) and *gaali* (verbal abuse).

The question is whether the *shabda* (words) get connected to the person or not. The great poet Bhavabhooti wrote, in context of the Uttara Ramacharita (when Shri Rama ruled Ayodhya after his return from Lanka) that there are many poets in the world. They see the things that happen in the world and write about them. The object first comes into their heart and then they speak of it.

However, the real Rishis do not speak about the things that they see in the world. They say something, and the world becomes according to what they say.

Risheenaam punaraadyaanaam vaacham arthoanudhaavati.

The *artha* (meaning) follows the *vaachaa* (words) of the Mahapurusha.

I will tell you one or two things about *paapa* (sin). You can compare the difference in the shaap given to Raja Parikshit and the shaaps given to others.

Among Manu's sons there was a son called Prishaghra. He stayed with his Gurudev and did the work of grazing the cows. When I was young I did not find this story convincing. However, I heard that the sons of the King of England worked at the coal furnace of ships during their training.

Why are Princes sent to do such hard work?

It is to ensure that Princes do not become pampered weaklings, addicted to luxuries and sensual indulgences; or form excessive family attachments and aversions. They need to remain unbiased, become hard working, educated, and willing to serve and do their duty. It is the duty of parents to give this training to their sons. This is why Manu sent Prishaghra to the Gurukul (the Guru's hermitage).

One day Prishaghra killed a cow. A tiger attacked the herd and Prishaghra drew his sword to kill it. The tiger moved very fast, and the sword hit a cow. It was a genuine accident.

Gurudev said, 'you have killed a cow – become a *shoodra* (of the lowest caste).'

Prishagrah felt very happy. Any disciple in present times would feel indignant. He would argue the case. However, Prishagrah felt, 'This is Guruji's *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) on me that he made me fall from the status of Royalty. Now, I won't be married in the Kshatriya (warrior) caste. My mother and father will not see me as their son. Let me get immersed in Bhagwan.'

Prishagrah obtained Tattvagnan (enlightenment). He became a Brahmarshi (an ascetic who has experienced the Brahman). He did not become a Shudra; he became a Brahmagnani!

I will tell you about another shaap. There was a Raja called Saudas. He, too, was innocent of a deliberate offence, but he was given a shaap. What happened is that his enemy came to his palace disguised as a cook. When Raja Saudas invited Vasishtaji for a meal, he served meat to the Rishi. Vasishtaji was furious. 'You have placed the food of a *chaandaala* (the lowest caste) before me!' he told Saudas. 'Become a chandal!'

'Guruji', pleaded Saudas, 'it is not a deliberate offence done by me. I will find out who is the real culprit.' It was found that his enemy, who was working in the kitchen as a cook, had done this to destroy Raja Saudas.

Raja Saudas was very upset with his Guruji. 'Why did you give me a shaap?' he asked. 'I will also give you a shaap.' When he took water in the cup of his hand to make the formal resolve of a shaap, his wife stopped him. 'Oh, this is our Guruji!' she said. 'It would be very wrong to give him a shaap. So what if he gave you a shaap? Guruji has the power to give a shaap and also do anugraha.'

Raja Saudas let the water trickle on his feet. His feet turned black. Since then he became known as Kalmashpada (a person who has black feet). By the kripa of Vasishtaji his vansha flourished.

Listen to yet another episode of a shaap. You would be reading the Shrimad Bhagwat repeatedly, but there are some episodes that people don't notice. Raja Nimi asked Vasishta to be the *purohita* (officiating priest) of his Yagna. Vasishtaji told him, 'I have promised Indra I will attend his *satra* (a sacrificial ritual lasting a hundred days). I will conduct your Yagna when I come back.'

Raja Nimi jumped to a wrong conclusion. 'My Guruji is greedy. I am the Raja of this mortal world and Indra is the Raja of Swarga. Guruji will get more *dakshinaa* (monetary gift) there, that is why he has left me and gone to Indra.'

Humans err in their understanding. People tell a Mahatma, 'Maharaj, I am a poor man. Why will you come to my home? You will go to the grand houses of the affluent!' They think they are talking about their own lack of wealth, but what their words indicate is that the Mahatma is greedy.

A lady told a Mahatma, 'I am now an old woman. Why will you listen to my request? I will send my young daughter-in-law to invite you and persuade you to come to our house.' This is how people come to a false understanding. Such false impressions result in souring of hearts.

Raja Nimi got the *dosha-drishti* (false viewpoint about his Guru being greedy). 'Indra is very rich, which is why my Guruji chose to go to him first.' This was followed by another thought. 'What is the certainty that I will live until his return, or that I will have the strength to do the Yagna? It may be that I won't have the means to meet the expenses by the time the satra is over.' He appointed another priest and started his Yagna.

When Vasishta returned he was angry at Raja Nimi's behavior. 'You feared you would die – well then, die!' he said. Nimi died before his Yagna was completed. Before he died he said, 'Guruji, you are giving me a shaap, so I will also give you a shaap. If the *yajamaana* (person doing the Yagna) dies, let the Guruji die also!'

Nimi was such a disciple that he wanted the Guru to die with him! 'I will make you die before I die,' was his sentiment!

Guruji also died. Then Vasishta was born with the connection of Mitravarun (Mitra means the Sun. Varun is the presiding deity of water). Nimi did not accept rebirth.

The fact is, Bhagwan wanted to separate Nimi's vansha from the vansha of Manu – the Ikshvaku vansha. He wanted that Raja Janak should be born in a separate lineage. Raja Janak was *aatmavidyaa-vishaarada vide`ha* (an enlightened person who no longer identified with his body). Bhagwan wanted Sitaji to be born in a different lineage and get married to Shri Rama who would be born in the Ikshvaku vansha.

So, in order to separate Nimi's vansha from Manu's – to make it the Nimi vansha – for Sitaji to be born in an *ayonijaa* (unborn) vansha, Bhagwan did this extraordinary *leelaa* (play). He induced Vasishta to give Raja Nimi a shaap. Nimi, however, was not able to understand that there was a divine purpose behind the shaap. It was only after he died that he understood, 'Guruji had given me a shaap for my kalyan.'

There are many other incidents of shaap. The Princes of the Yadu vansha – Shri Krishna's sons and grandsons – escorted His son Samba, dressed up as a pregnant woman, and went to the Mahatmas assembled there. 'Maharaj, will she get a son or a daughter?'

Here, you can see the difference in the attitude of the older and younger generations. It is a difference that has always existed. Elders have faith in, and respect for, the Sant-Mahatmas, but youngsters are *ashraddhaalu* (lacking in faith). We people find nothing new in this. People say that the next generation is going astray. No, the younger generation is not going astray. When they grow older they will also become *shraddhaalu* (having faith) in order to develop *shraddhaa* (faith) in their children.

Ravindranath Tagore wrote a story titled 'Sumati'. As long as the parents were alive, the older son was very wayward. When they died he had to look after his younger brother. He became aware of the need to change his lifestyle. He was afraid that his younger brother would also develop bad habits unless he improved. He molded himself to become the kind of man he wanted his younger brother to be. It is a beautiful story.

I was telling you about Shri Krishna's shraddha and the ashaddha of His sons. The Mahatmas – '*bhagavanmatakovidah*' – knew what Bhagwan desired. They gave a shaap.

I will tell you of yet another shaap. People get displeased with Durvasa Rishi because of his tendency to give shaap.

There is a story in the Mahabharata that Durvasaji forced *joothaa* (food rendered impure by touching to the mouth) *kheera* (a milk and rice pudding) to be smeared on Shri Krishna's body. Then he said, 'Why have You not put it on Your feet?'

'Maharaj,' said Shri Krishna, 'how can I put your *prasaada* (food offered to Bhagwan and eaten as a blessing) on My feet?'

'Then an arrow will pierce Your foot. The rest of Your body will become as invincible as a *vajra* (thunderbolt)! Yoke Ruxmani to the chariot!' He made Rukmini and Shri Krishna pull the chariot on which he sat. Durvasaji was very quick to anger. He got angry with Raja Ambarish.

You must keep one thing in mind. Durvasa is a bhagavat. He knows the Bhagwat-Dharma. He is an *ansha* (part) of Shiva. He accepts a bad reputation, allowing himself to be blamed, and his name to be blackened for all time.

Why?

Because it is not possible to show the greatness of another without belittling yourself. Durvasaji wants the world to see how Bhagwan does *kripa* on His bhaktas, how He protects them, and how bhaktas remain unshaken in their faith. His purpose is to show the greatness of the Bhagwat-Dharma, and the greatness of Bhakti. He wants the *shaanti* (inner peace) and *dhairya* (fortitude) of the bhaktas to be known.

There are many episodes like this. At times I go back and forth to elaborate on a point. Here, the main episode is that of Raja Parikshit.

When Raja Parikshit went to the ashram of Shringi Rishi, the Mahatma was immersed in a Samadhi. Raja Parikshit did not believe that he was indeed in a Samadhi. The main episode begins with lack of shraddha. It begins with disbelief. The fact is the Bhagwat-Dharma works on the strength of *shraddha-vishvaasa* (faith-belief).

Just yesterday I was getting a Sanskrit article written by Pundit Gopinath Kaviraj translated to Hindi. It contained a statement that nobody can get the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the Satya without Gnan. If he gets

the sakshatkara that the Atma and the Paramatma are one, it will be only after he has attained Tattvagnan.

Unless and until he gets the Tattva sakshatkara he will have to have faith that what he is told is true. You can't proceed even one step towards Tattvagnan unless you have shraddha. Pundit Gopinath Kaviraj is acknowledged as one of the most learned scholars in the world on Vedic culture, Dharma and philosophy. In his opinion, if a person does not accept the teaching of the Shastras, and creates his vritti accordingly, how will he ever get the Ishwara's sakshatkara?

Raja Parikshit said, '*Mrishaa samaadhiraaho (1. 18. 31)* – this Mahatma is pretending to be in a Samadhi.'

Even if he did not believe that the Mahatma was in a Samadhi, Raja Parikshit should not have put a dead snake round the Mahatma's neck! Raja Parikshit saw a dead python lying there. He lifted it with the tip of his bow and put it round the neck of the Mahatma.

Shringi Rishi remained unaffected. Neither did he move nor did he get frightened. He was immersed in a Samadhi and had no awareness of the outer world. Raja Parikshit went away.

The *vichaara* (thinking) after this is excellent! The Rishi's son wept when he saw his father. He gave a shaap, '*A takshaka* (deadly serpent) will bite Raja Parikshit seven days from today, and the Raja will die.'

Give some thought to this – when the Mahatma came out of his Samadhi and learnt what had transpired, he said: *alpaeeyasi droha ururdamo dhritah (1. 18. 41)* – O my child! The Raja committed a minor *aparaadha* (offence), but you have given a big punishment. You have done an injustice with Raja Parikshit.'

That, too, was a shaap. What should be the situation after a shaap is given? The person against whom the aparadh was done said, 'a big punishment has been given for a minor offence. It is an injustice done by my son.'

What did Raja Parikshit feel about the shaap? One possibility was that he should give a shaap in retaliation, a shaap of the same magnitude.

It is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that such a thought never arose in Parikshit's mind. Raja Parikshit said, 'My offence was not putting the dead serpent round the Mahatma's neck; it was my having become *vimukha* (turned away) from Bhagwan, and become trapped in the *sansara* (interactive outer world). *Yatra prasakto bhayamaashu dhatte`* (1. 19. 14). I had become *aasakta* (deeply attached) to the *prapancha* (interactive world) that creates fear in a person who gets attached to it.

The Rishi's son gave me a shaap so that *nirve`da* (disregard for worldly considerations) should rise in my heart. Death does not bother me in the least.'

There is always the possibility of something terrible happening in life. Things go wrong in everybody's life. If, at that time, the person holds on to Bhagwan the terrible time becomes the greatest *varadaana* (boon; blessing). But if he does not take the opportunity to connect his *monovritti* (mental inclination) to Bhagwan, that terrible time is terrible indeed!

What is the best thing in Raja Parikshit? Look; Bhagwan protected Parikshit from the Brahmastra when he was still in his mother's womb. Bhagwan Himself come into the womb with His divine *chakra* (discus) and *gadaa* (mace). Similarly, He protected Parikshit from a shaap that was as invincible as the Brahmastra.

Parikshit felt no anger against the Brahmin, or for the boy who gave the shaap. He did not worry about his realm and he had no fear of death. In that state, he experienced supreme peace and supreme detachment.

Raja Parikshit said: '*Kuhakastakshako vaa dashatvalam gaayata vishnugaathaah* (1. 19. 15) – let mrityu itself assume a form and come to me, or let the takshak come and bite me; I am not at all concerned about that. I am not bothered about death or life. You please tell me about Bhagwan's *charitra* (conduct in life) in a way that I can become engrossed in it.'

Then Bhagwan manifested in the form of Shukadevji. Shri Shukadev is also a bhagavat and Raja Parikshit is also a bhagavat. If the Dharma they followed comes into our life, we can become free of all the dukhas of this world

There is a question: did Raja Parikshit get frightened of death? Did he get *vairagya* (detachment) because of his fear of death? And, did he do this *shravana* (listening to and absorbing the purport of the discourse) of the Shrimad Bhagwat *kathaa* (story; discourse) because he feared to die?

When you go deep into the Shrimad Bhagwat it becomes clear that Raja Parikshit did not get *vairagya* because of any fear. It is true that people fear death. If the fear of death results in *vairagya* and Bhagwan's *bhakti*, and the person becomes *antarmukha* (turned inwards), it should be understood to be his good fortune. Whatever the reason, if it induces a human being to walk on the path to Bhagwan, it is a matter of *kalyan*. In Raja Parikshit's life, however, something quite different is seen.

First I will tell you a thing or two about *mrityu*. When I was still a child, I had heard that the astrologers had predicted that I would die at the age of nineteen. Both my father and my grandfather were astrologers of great renown. They were both convinced that since this child's life is so short, he should be married at an early age. They wanted to ensure the continuation of the lineage, and I was the only male through whom the lineage would continue.

When I understood the matter I began to go to Mahatmas. I hoped to find a Mahatma who could save me from death. Even now, I remember some of them with great clarity. I will tell you about some of them.

There was a Mahatma Gulabchandji. He was of the Aghori sect. He abstained from drinking alcohol as long as I was with him. Please don't get upset with the things I am about to tell you. Close to Kashi (Varanasi) there was a sect called the Keenaram Pantha. That Pantha (sect) had Sadhus who would eat anything. By anything I mean things that nobody would ever eat.

Gulabchandji was a great *siddha* (having supernatural powers). An example of his powers is still alive. He is a Muslim boy who used to go to the Mahatma. One day, the boy died. Maharaj was not in the village that day; he had gone to a nearby village. The family buried the boy.

‘Oh Rama!’ said Maharaj when he returned and heard the news. ‘You have buried the boy alive! He is not dead! Open the grave quickly!’ He made them dig up the grave. The boy was alive! Later, he left his house, his wife, and parents, and went to serve the Mahatma. He served Gulabchandji for twenty five years, and looked after his ashram when he died.

There is a gentleman who lives in Jabalpur. He is my bhakta. His name is Girijanandan. He has a solid understanding of Vedanta. He also died when he was about four years old. In those days, the village people did not burn the body of a child who had passed away; they either buried it or let it flow away in a river. They buried the boy.

A Mahatma called Dhuni Baba lived there at that time. ‘Oh you have buried the child alive!’ he said. He made them dig the grave. By the Grace of God the child came back to life. He is still living. He met me some twenty six years ago. Since then he has been my bhakta.

I am telling you about these *chamatkaara* (miracles) to explain that there is tremendous power in the *sankalpa* (mental resolves) of a tapasvi Mahapurusha.

So, there was a *vaasanaa* (intense desire) in me to find a Mahatma who would save me from death. The *tithi* (date according to the lunar calendar) of my death had been fixed. I told one Mahatma about the anguish in my heart. He told me, ‘Look; I do not have the power to save you from death, but I give you this advice – you should not go to any Mahatma and ask him to save you from death. I will place you in a state where you will have no fear of death. I have an *upaaya* (method; solution) by which you become *nirbhaya* (free of fear) of death.’

That Mahatma taught me that to be free of the fear of death is superior to fearing death or try to escape death. Death is such a solid Satya of life that it will have to be faced sooner or later. So I should prepare for it from my youth.

I am not telling you anything serious. What I say is something very light and easy. If it is constantly in your mind that you are to face death one day, aren’t you constantly spoiling your present? If you hold on to grief by thinking of the past, and the people and things that are no more, that much of time has been wasted.

And, if you begin to worry about any dukha that the future may bring, you forget about the things you have to do in the present. You ruin your present. I told you this about death and about dukha. Now, listen to some further points about this.

You may think, 'Yesterday I attained a Samadhi. I got the Ishwara's darshan.' Or, 'I was established in my Atma.' And, 'I am not in that state today.' Think about whether you are an *aparaadhee* (guilty of an offence) of the Ishwara or of Samadhi, because that Samadhi you attained yesterday – which broke – was not a real Samadhi. It was not the Ishwara. It was not even your Atma, because the Atma never breaks; but the Samadhi broke.

The Ishwara you met yesterday went away. He is not with you today. His meeting you was negated by *kaala* (time). No wonder you feel sad! If you think that you will obtain the Ishwara when you go to Vaikuntha or Goloka, are you doing justice to the Ishwara who is here?

Please apply your mind to this point – if you think you will obtain the Ishwara after two days, are you doing justice to the Ishwara who is present today? Today's Ishwara is disdained when you think about tomorrow's Ishwara. You disdain the Ishwara who is here, when you think about the Ishwara who is far away!

I am not saying that the Ishwara is not present in Samadhi. The Ishwara was present in the Samadhi. He will also be present in Vaikuntha and Goloka when you go there. What I mean to say is that when a *narmadeshwara* (a stone from the Narmada river, worshipped as Bhagwan Shiva) is in front of you, you believe it is the Ishwara before you; but if it is a Shaligram Shila (a round stone worshipped as Bhagwan Vishnu) you don't believe it is the Ishwara. Or else, you believe the Ishwara to be in the Shaligram Shila but not in the Narmadeshwara. This is not doing justice to the Ishwara! Actually, we do justice to the Ishwara when we believe Him to be present in this very moment, here, where we are, and in what we experience.

If time moves, we move seeing the Ishwara in it. If we walk, we walk seeing the Ishwara. If times change, every change is a *roopa* (form) of the Ishwara. Just think – when we sit on the bank of the Gangaji and see the ripples and drops of water

flowing, don't we believe every drop and ripple to be a form of the Gangaji? The water that flowed past was the Ganga and the water flowing now is also the Gangaji. In the same way, *de'sha* (space; place), *kaala* (time), *vyakta* (individuals), *vastu* (objects) etc flow in the form of the Ishwara.

This was told to me by a Mahatma who had a vision of Gangaji.

Look; I give discourses on everything connected to the *sanaatana* (eternal; without a beginning or an end) Dharma and I believe in it.

Gangaa gange`ti yo brooyaat yojanaanaam shatairapi,

Muchyate`sarva paape`bhyo vishnulokam gachhati.

If a person walks for a hundred *yojana* (measure of distance) chanting 'Ganga! Ganga!' he will become free of paapa and attain Vishnuloka.

Ganga! Ganga! Ganga! *Gaganam abhivaapta gachhati iti gangaa* – Ganga, who pervades all space! You may believe this world to be the result of the sankalpa of the Brahman. You may accept the opinion of Vallabhacharya, that the world is an *avikrita* (not distorted) *parinaama* (result; effect, and the Brahman is the cause). You may accept the opinion of Shri Ramanujacharya of the *kaarya-kaarana* (the effect that is this world and the Brahman that is the cause), Nimbarkacharya's opinion is that of Shakti and *vikshe`pa* (scattering of the power, this world), or a *vivarta* (a variable) as per the opinion of Shri Shankaracharya. According to the Yoga Vasishtha the world is a *sfoorana* (pulsation of the Brahman). However, this *prapancha* (the gross world composed of the five elements) is I, you, this, and that; and this whole world is not separate from the Ishwara.

This is so wonderful that when we reflect upon it, our heart begins to prance in the sky! The heart of some people is such that it becomes *thappa* (comes to an end) when the person obtains the knowledge about the Brahman, and the heart of some begins to prance.

If your attitude is that thappa is right, you will experience dukha when the heart prances. And, if you consider that the heart should only prance, you will feel

dukha when it becomes thappa. Therefore, when the heart prances it is the form of the Ishwara, and it is also the form of the Ishwara when it becomes thappa!

What I want to explain is that there is no *samaya* (time) when the *anubooti* (feeling of the presence) of the Ishwara is not there, when the Ishwara is not present. There is no object, person, group or religious sect where the Ishwara is not; that is not the Ishwara!

This point has an excellent consequence. I will tell you about it. When we believe the Ishwara to be *sarvaatmaka* (the Atma of all), we believe Him to be not only sarvatmak but also *sarvaateeta* (beyond everything). When we believe the Ishwara to be *nitya* (eternal), we believe Him to be a *sahayogee* (associate) of *kaala* (time). Being eternal is connected to time. The Ishwara Is, even when there is no time.

When we believe the Ishwara to be *poorna* (whole; complete within Himself) we believe Him to be equal to *de`sha* (space). The Ishwara Is, even where there is no space.

When we believe the *sarva-roopa* (all forms) Ishwara to be *kaarya-kaaranaatmaka* (the effect as well as the cause) we believe Him to be equal to the effect (this whole world) as well as the cause of it. The Ishwara Is, even where there is no karya-karana.

However, the result of this is extraordinary! If our *lakshya* (goal) is *sarva* (the whole; everything), the Ishwara's *lakshana* (characteristic; distinctive feature) will also be sarva, and the *saadhana* (method) for obtaining Him will also be sarva.

Bring this rule into your mental focus.

Hindu, mussalmaana, paarasee, sikh, jain, issaayi, yahoodi – sabke` seene`mein dhadakataa hai e`kasaa dil me`raa – My heart beats equally in the heart of every Hindu. Muslim, Parsi, Sikh, Jain, Christian, and Jew.

This is why Dharma is also a sadhan, Vedanta is also a sadhan, *tantra* (a mystical system) is also a sadhan, *mantra* (a group of words with subtle power) is also a

sadhan, *yantra* (a magic square) is also a sadhan, *se`vaa* (rendering service) is also a sadhan, and Samadhi is also a sadhan.

If you say that seva is a sadhan but Samadhi is not, you are like a political leader who is turned towards the outside world; an opponent of Samadhi. If you say that Samadhi is a sadhan but seva isn't, you will be an opponent of seva, like a Yogi immersed in the Self.

Andhantamah pravishyanti ye` vidyaamupaasate`.

(Ishavasya Upanishad 9)

You will go into a dense darkness, or wander aimlessly in this world, because upasana and karma are causes of bondage. Gnan is necessary.

If *praarabdha* (fate created by the fruits of deeds done in the previous life) is everything, then:

Jahaan jahaan chaloan sooyi parikarama, jo-jo karoan so poojaa.

Wherever I walk, it is a respectful circumambulation; whatever I do is worship of Bhagwan..

Therefore, all Acharyas are correct, and all sadhans are correct. Where they are motivated by an *ansha* (part), they are all wrong, and where the state is *poorna* (whole), all are right.

The fact is the *drishti* (vision) is one; the difference of *sahee-galata* (right-wrong) is wrong. I told you a little about the basics. It is good to know a little about the background.

What I wanted to explain is that Raja Parikshit did not fear death in the least bit. This is stated clearly in the Bhagwat, both at the start and at the conclusion. I told you yesterday what he said:

Kuhakastakshako vaa danshatvalam gaayata vishnugaathaah.

1. 19. 15.

Whether mrityu comes openly in the form of the takshak, or deceitfully – kuhak means deceit. Mrityu comes so suddenly that a person is often unaware that it is approaching! If you don't have a watch you don't know the time. Second after second passes unnoticed. The word *kshana* in the Nagari script has three letters. Kshana means a second. Kshana – or a second – is the *pada-vinyaasa* (orderly footstep) of mrityu. Mrityu too, is not a separate object; it is a form of the Ishwara.

You read the Gita, don't you?

Mrityuh sarvaharashchaaham.

(Gita 10. 34)

I am *sarvahara* (the stealer of everything) mrityu.

Kaalosmi lokakshayakritpravridhah.

(Gita 11. 32)

I am Time, who destroys everything.

Amritam chaiva mrityushcha sadasachchaahamarjuna.

(Gita 9. 19)

I am *amrita* (the elixir that bestows immortality) and I am also mrityu. I am Sat (the Satya that can never be negated) and I am *asat* (that, which is not the Satya).

Both amrita and mrityu are forms of Bhagwan. If you once recognize this, you will know that it is our Beloved Prabhu who is coming in the garb of death.

This very word – kshana – is the tinkle of Prabhu's anklets. Every separate object seen in creation is the *vastraabhooshana* (garments and ornaments that adorn Bhagwan). They are parts of Him. It is a drama of His. He is playing a role.

A Sant (Mahatma) of Maharashtra said when Bhagwan appeared before him in the form of a gigantic ghost. 'O Bhagwan! You have becomes very tall today!

Dekha mrityukaa roopa dhare` main nahin daroongaa tumase` naatha.

O Nath (Master)! You will not frighten me by coming in the guise of mrityu!

Vaha paga dvani me`ree pahachaani.

I recognize the sound of Your footsteps.'

So, Narayana! Raja Parikshit said, 'Whether mrityu comes before me in the form of a takshak or stealthily, does not bother be in the least – *balam gaayato vishnugaathaa* – please tell me Bhagwan's stories.'

That means, we should immerse ourselves, in this present time, in the ocean of Bhagwan's *naama* (name), *charitra* (stories about His character and nature), and His *guna* (qualities). Bhagwan is flowing, Bhagwan is spreading, Bhagwan is becoming whatever there is!

I am explaining this to you so that if anyone speaks to you, accusing Parikshit of turning to *aadhyaatma* (spirituality) out of fear of death, you can explain to him that that was certainly not the case. It is not that only timid people go on the path of spirituality, or that only fear of death makes a person turn towards Bhakti. You will have no difficulty in understanding this simple Sanskrit:

Bhagavaana takshakaadibhyo mrityubhyo na vibhe`myaham.

11. 6. 5.

These are Parikshit's words: 'I am not afraid of death with the takshak as its *nimitta* (instrumental factor). It is not fear that makes me want to listen to *bhagavat-charchaa* (talk about Bhagwan). Bhagwan's charcha is dear to me. It is the Truth; it is Gnan.'

So come, let us do Bhagwat-charcha!

The Second Canto.

Three things have been explained in the second canto, in a unique manner.

1. How to do dhyana on the Tattva of Bhagwan.
2. Having a *nirmala hridaya* (limpid heart).
3. The highest level of vichar, meaning, *manana* (reflecting deeply on spiritual matters).

These are the three points: to meditate, to have an unsullied mind, and to think only about Bhagwan.

The second canto has ten *adhyaya* (chapters). The first two are about dhyana. Of the next two chapters, one is about the purity of the heart of the *shrota* (the listener) and the other is about the purity of the heart of the *vakta* (speaker). The remaining six chapters are devoted to manan.

In the chapters on manan, one chapter describes the creation of the world. One describes the creation of the *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual), and one is about the Avatars of Bhagwan. The remaining three chapters are an exposition of the Brahman. Just reading the Bhagwat like a story book is not enough; it has to be understood.

A young man who had completed his B.A. and left college came to me. He wanted me to teach him Vedanta. I asked him, do you have any *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions) about Vedanta?’

‘No,’ he replied. ‘So far I have no particular inclination or reservation.’

I told him to read some books, starting with the Panchadashi. ‘Come and talk to me after you have studied it,’ I said. It is not possible to discuss Vedanta unless you have some basic knowledge about the subject.’ He asked where he could get the book from. I told him to go to the Ashram library and borrow the translation written by Shri Ramavatar Sharma, guided by Shri Achyutmuniji.

The young man came back two days later, saying he had finished reading the book. He told me he had understood it. I told him, ‘My brother, it took me and my

colleagues two to four years to study the Panchadashi, and you understood it in two days? Your intellect is indeed remarkable!’

The Bhagwat, too, is not to be read through like a story book. You have to give profound thought to the significance of each point as you read.

Shrotavyah keertitavyashcha dhye`yah poojyashcha nityadaa.

1. 3. 14.

You should do shravan, kirtan and dhyana of Bhagwan.

Tasmaad bhaarata sarvaatmaa bhagavaan harireesgvarah,

shrotavyah keertitavyashcha smartavyashche`chchhataabhyaam.

2. 1. 5.

A person who wants the *abhaya pada* (position of being fearless) should do shravan, kirtan and think about Shri Krishna, who is the Atma of all, and all-powerful.

Shukadevji Maharaj said, ‘Raja Parikshit! *Shrotavya* – do shravan about Bhagwan.’

Today, when you say that there is no need for shravan, I ask you whether you knew the Shastras from the time of your birth. Oh, everything in our mind has been learnt by listening! There is *raaga* (attachment) caused by things you have heard and there is *dve`sha* (aversion), also due to things you have heard. It is through shravan that we know that *vairagya* (detachment) is superior to *raaga-dvesha*. *Vairagya* means being free of worldly attachments and aversions. We know *Samadhi* is an excellent thing because we have heard about it. It is through shravan that we say that the Atma is the *svaroopa* (essence; true form) of the Paramatma.

What is the expanse of your *vaasanaa* (avid desires)? Narayana, take some time to ponder on this.

One is the *praarabdha vaasanaa* – desires that are a result of the fruits of deeds done in a previous birth. Another is the *poorvaanubhava vaasanaa* – the desires caused by experiences in a previous birth. For example, a newborn begins to suckle as soon as his mother's breast touches his mouth. He knows he will get milk. *Avidyaa vaasanaa* is the avidya – or nescience – that is caused by a person's identifying with his body. This is my mother, this is my father, this is my son, this is my house, etc. Avidya vasana means stupidity. Then, there is *karma vaasanaa* – the urge to do things.

You cannot progress in the direction of spirituality unless and until you do shravan about the Paramartha (highest spiritual truth), about Samadhi, and about vairagya. The shravan may be in the modern style or the old fashioned manner, but the *indriyaateeta padaartha* (the substance that is beyond the scope of the senses) cannot come into your life unless you do shravan.

You remember the inner tranquility you experienced when you were in Samadhi. Do you know that neither *smarana* (remembering; thinking about Bhagwan) nor *smriti* (memory) is Gnan? Smriti is not *pramaana* (proof; something that has been established). Smriti is not *pratyaksha* (perceived directly). You may say, 'I am getting *darshan* (seeing a revered person) of Bhagwan in my *chitta* (mind; thoughts) just now.'

The Vedantis have an extraordinary method of *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress). It is that the state of the person is *jagrita* (the waking state), and the *vritti* (mental inclination) is made like *sushupti* (the deep sleep state). Keep sitting, keep awake, and meditate on what was in the deep sleep state.

What will be the result of this?

The result will be that all names and forms will be swept away.

The first dhyana described in the Shrimad Bhagwat is that of Brahmaji. When the world was created, a lotus emerged from the *naabhi* (naval) of Narayana. Brahmaji appeared on the lotus. People will think that this, too, is mythology. When I was a youngster, somebody told me that foreigners call our Puranas

mythology. I do not know what mythology means, but I connect it to our word *mithyaa* (false)!

Never mind. Regarding Brahmaji appearing on the lotus that emerged from Narayana's nabhi, it is not that I understood what it indicates when I was a child. It was only after I began to go to Mahatmas that they explained it to me.

A Mahatma asked me, 'Narayana's nabhi, the lotus that emerged from it, and Brahmaji on the lotus – what do you understand about this?'

I said, 'Maharaj, I have seen, at a place called Sukha Sagar, a picture with Narayana reclining on the *she'sha shaiyaa* (the serpent Shesha coiled to make a bed). Laxmiji is pressing Bhagwan's feet. A lotus has risen out of Narayana's nabhi, and Brahmaji – with four heads – is sitting on the lotus.'

'Did you ever wonder how big Narayana's nabhi is?' asked the Mahatma.

I remembered that this was mentioned in the second canto of the Bhagwat: *nabhayo naabi* – the nabhi of Narayana is the *nabha* (sky; space). Then, how vast would Narayana's stomach be! If the nabhi is so vast that the air in this world moves in it, the sky darkens and brightens in it, the entire geography and astronomy are as miniscule as a drop in it – if Narayana's nabhi is so vast, how immense would Shesha Bhagwan, on whom Narayana sleeps, be?

Shesha Bhagwan is *pradhaanaatmaka* (having the quality of being predominant), in whose lap Narayana reclines. Prakriti (Nature; the Ishwara's power of Creation) is the *beeja-kaarana* (the seed that is the cause of creation) *pradhaana* (principle) of the world. The Brahman is merely the *sacchidaananda* (Sat = pure existence, chit = pure consciousness, anand = pure bliss).

The *jagat-beeja* (seed of this world) in the Sacchidananda Brahman, and the *antaryaamee* (the one who abides in all hearts) Narayana in the beej, and then Narayana's nabhi, and Brahmaji – the Creator – in the nabhi; with fourteen *bhuvana* (cosmological regions, below and above and including the earth) – seem in danger of sinking.

What dhyana did Brahmaji do as soon as he was created?

He did dhyana of the *viraata* (the universal form of Bhagwan). This entire creation is in the Paramatma.

E`vam puraadhaaranayaatmayonih nashtaam smritim pratyavarudhya tushthaat.

(3.2. 1)

Brahmaji did the dhyana of *paataala* (one of the seven subterranean regions) in the soles of Bhagwan's feet and Brahmaloaka (the realm of Brahmaji) in His head. Bhagwan's breath is the air, and His eyes are the Surya (sun) and Chandra (moon). His body is the four *varna* (social levels: the Brahmins who preserve the scriptures, the Kshatriyas who rule, the Vaishyas who trade and the Shudras who serve). Bhagwan's body also has the four *aashrama* (stages of life: the Brahmacharya ashram of the celibate student, the Grihastha ashram of the married householder, the Vanaprastha ashram of the middle-aged who turn towards spirituality, and the Sanyas where people take the vows of renunciation).

All the Devtas (divine powers; presiding deities) are in Bhagwan's body. The *pancha-bhoota* (five elements: earth, water, fire, air and space, of which all matter is made), including the earth, are in Bhagwan's body.

Brahmaji did dhyana of Bhagwan's body in this manner. Then he got Gnan about *srishti* (creation).

This is called Tattvagnan. This dhyana cannot be done if a person has *raaga-dve'sha* (attachment-aversion). The four heads of Brahmaji signify the antahkarana that creates our personal world. It is purified when a person does Tattva-dhyana.

Two kinds of dhyana are described here: Tattva-dhyana and *roopa-dhyaana* (dhyana of Bhagwan's form). Generally it is said that the dhyana of the Virat is the main dhyana, because later on dhyana of Narayana's four-armed form is done in the hriday.

Ke`chid svade`haantarhridayaavakaashe` parade`shamaatram purusham basantam.

(2. 2.8)

The importance of the objects of the senses disappears in both dhyanas. Karma-mukti (liberation from the fruits of karmas) and *sadyo-mukti* (perpetual liberation) are both described in the Bhagwat.

This is Bhagwat-Dharma, after all!

The primary form of the Bhagwat-Dharma is that everything is the Paramatma. The Paramatma abides in all. The Paramatma is beyond everything, The Paramatma is outside the Atma. The Atma is the Paramatma!

This principle is accepted by all Vaishnava principles (sects that worship the Brahman in the form of Vishnu Bhagwan).

‘This world is a form of the Ishwara’, is accepted by the Shaivas (who worship Shiva), Vaishnavas, Ganapatyas (who worship Ganesh), Saurya (who worship the Sun), and the followers of Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Vallabha, Madhva and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

If I wanted to point out the differences in the opinions, I could easily do so, but there are too many discussions on differences in the opinions of the different sects. We should also discuss the *abhe`da* (absence of differences). For example, we are two separate people. You are different and I am different. We both know we are separate individuals. We may be different in many ways, but we can sometimes talk about our similarities. We both have noses in front, and eyes on either side. We both have hands that have the same shape. We both have *dil-dimaaga* (feelings-intellect), and we have some common desires.

We should also see the things we have in common; not just the differences. Then, we will understand how similar we are. We have the same *ude`shya* (purpose; goal). We have the same sadhan. We have similar features and common desires. When we understand this, we begin to think on the lines of amity and cooperation. To focus only on differences, analysis, and discriminate, is to isolate.

The main principle of the Brahma Sutra is: *Tattu samanvayaat* – oneness.

‘*Athaato brahmajignaasaa*’ – this is why we enquire about the Brahman

‘*Janmaadasya yatah*’ – from which everything is created

‘*Shaastrayonitvaat, tatttu samanvayaat*’ – is born from the Shatras.

Even though there are differences of opinion between the Ramanuja, Shankar, and Vallabha principles, they all accept the Vedas as *pramaana* (proof). Is this not unity? They are of the same opinion regarding the proof.

Very well, don’t all sects accept the Atma as being separate from the *de`ha* (body)? Indeed they do! They also agree that this entire creation is made by the Ishwara.

So, when we focus on the differences in the opinions there are arguments, and when we see the points of unity it results in an absence of raaga-dvesha. There is equanimity in our heart, and this leads to *prasaada* (serene happiness) of the hriday.

There is a description of a *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) in the Bhagwat. He sat on an *aasana* (mat). He put pressure on his anus with the heel of his foot. He sent the *praana-vaayu* (life sustaining breath) in a serial order, through the six *chakra* (centers of subtle energy based along the spine) starting with the Mooladhara, then Swadhishtana, Manipurak, Anahata, and Vishuddha, to the Agna Chakra.

It is described that he got an unspoken message, ‘If you want to be *mukta* (liberated from rebirth) leave your prana here. If you want to do *saira* (travel) – *sahaiva gachche`t manase`ndriyaishchcha* – you should not let go of the mana and the *indriya* (senses); you should take them with you.’

Then, where will you reach?

The description says that you will go to various realms and then reach Brahmaloaka – the realm of Brahmaji.

Brahmaloaka means the *sookshma samashti* – the subtle entirety. Hiranyagarbha – the subtle consciousness that pervades all matter – stays there in a *pratyaksha*

(that which can be experienced by the senses) form. I do not intend to describe this. I want to explain the particular point made here.

When you reach Brahmaloka, there is *shaanti* (inner tranquility) at times, and *vikshe`pa* (disturbance) at times. In that realm there is no dukha, no old age, and no *udve`ga* (agitation). This is stated in the Bhagwat.

Old age also causes dukha.

The Mahatma, who was an individual with an antahkarana, reached Brahmaloka. He saw that there was no illness, no mrityu, no youth, no old age and no vasanas there.

Look; when a person goes to Swarga, his vasanas are fulfilled, and this gives him sukha. When a person goes to Brahmaloka, his vasanas are quieted, and this gives him sukha. Brahmaloka is superior to Swarga, because no gross objects are needed for a person to be sukhi in Brahmaloka. Brahmaloka has the Bhagwat-Dharma.

You may visualize Brahmaloka as a huge space ship high above the earth. The Mahatma got the impulse, 'Let me look down and see what is happening in *martyaloka* (the world of the mortals; the earth). As soon as he saw the state of the people on earth, his heart was filled with pain. It is a particular characteristic of the Bhagwat-Dharma to become dukhi when you see the dukha of others.

Yachchit tatodah kripayaanidamvidaam durantadukhaprabhavaanudarshanaat.

(2.2. 27)

There is one dukha even in Brahmaloka.

What is that?

When the residents of Brahmaloka look down at Mrityuloka and see how dukhi people are, even when there is no actual dukha, then: *kripayaa anidam vidaam durantadukhaprabhavaanudarshanaat* – the people of the world do not know that actually, there is no birth or death of the Atma. It is because of not knowing

their *ajanmaa* (unborn) Atma that people become dukhi. It is as though they are in a dream, caught in the cycle of life and death.

Some people are dukhi because of things they imagine. The beings of this mortal world are dukhi even though there is no real dukha. Mrityu does not exist, but they are experiencing mrityu. There is no old age or illness for the Atma, but they believe themselves to be old and unwell.

The Mahatma saw all this, sitting in Brahmaloka, and he became dukhi.

Give your mind to this: there is an important principle here. Even after going to Brahmaloka, the Mahatma experienced the sorrow of the people of this world; people who experienced dukha even when there was no real cause for it.

You would have heard the episode of Raja Rantidev. Rantidev went hungry for forty eight days before Bhagwan came to him. Do you think there was no wealth in Rantidev's treasury? He was an Emperor; the sole ruler of all seven continents!

Rantidev got no food or water for forty eight days. On the forty ninth day he got a little food and water, but he gave it away. Do you think that the people in Rantidev's kingdom were also starving? Or that he had no Ministers, Generals, Army, Courts of Law, or Treasury? Or, do you think none of them were functional?

It is not so. Everything worked. However, the wealth on which the Kingdom functioned belonged to the people. It was gathered through taxes and penalties. Rantidev felt it did not belong to him; he felt it belonged to his people, and should be used for their benefit. That is why he did not use this wealth for his personal use. He ate *roti* (unleavened bread) that was earned by him, and water that he had a right to drink.

So, Bhagwan manifested before Rantidev after he had gone without food and water for twenty eight days.

'Ask for a *varadaana* (boon),' He said.

Rantidev said:

Na kaamaye`aham gatimeeshvaraata paraam ashtarddhiyuktaam apunarbhavam vaa.

(9. 21. 12)

‘I do not want *siddhi* (supernatural powers). I do not desire Samadhi; nor do I desire Moksha (liberation from rebirth).’

‘Then what do you desire?’

‘*Apunarbhavam vaa* – I want to abide in all hearts.’

Bhagwan said, ‘I am already present in all hearts. Do you want to be My equal?’

‘No, Maharaj, I do not want to be Your equal at all! You please continue to abide in all hearts, watching all that goes on. You are the *saakshee* (witness). I do not want the status of an onlooker. I do not want *brahmataa* (being the Brahman). I do not wish for *vyaapakataa* (to be all-pervading).’

‘Then, what do you want?’

Aarti prapadye`akhilade`habhaajam antahsthitto ye`na bhavantyadukhaah.

(9. 21. 12.)

‘What I want is to be present in all hearts and take the *bhoga* (suffering that is a result of their past sins) of their dukha. Let all beings in the world be sukhi, and You remain the sakshi.’

Rantidev wanted Bhagwan to remain the sakshi, and for all beings to be happy, and he would take on the suffering the beings were destined to go through. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma!

Do you feel that such a Dharma is useful in the life of human beings, or not? It is an extremely lofty ideal; loftier than the life of an ordinary human being.

How is it possible for us to take on all the dukha of others?

You see, the ideal in this is not, 'let me take on all the dukha of others'; it is that our hriday should be so magnanimous, so large, that we want the happiness of all, and dukha for none. This is called the Bhagwat-Dharma!

The Mahatma in Brahmaloaka said, 'I am sitting on a space ship while the people in Martyaloka are suffering. I will not stay here with Brahma.'

Braahmanah samadrik shaanto deenaanaam samupe`kshakah,

sravate`brahma tasyaapi bhinnabhaandaatpayo yathaa.

(4.14. 41.)

He is a Brahmin, he is *samadarshee* (impartial), *shaanta* (at peace), a Brahmagnani. But - *deenaanaam samupe`kshakah* – he disdains the needy and the suffering. *Chyavate`brahma tasyaapi* – all his Gnan about the Vedas is wasted, *Bhinnabhaandaatpayo yathaa* – like water trickling out of a pot that has a crack.

Gnan is not sustained in a person who disdains the needy and the suffering.

The Mahatma said, 'I will not remain in Brahmaloaka any longer. How can I stay on Brahma's air plane while people suffer in Mrityaloka? Here, I am liberated from old age, disease, and death, so I become a member of Brahmaji's Court. That can never be.'

Tato vishe`sham pratipadya nirbhayah.

He leaped down and merged into the *dharatee* (earth). He became the dharati, and bore the weight of all beings. Then he became *jala* (water) and gave *rasa* (flavor) to all. Then he became *agni* (fire) and gave warmth to all. Then he became *vaayu* (air) and gave prana to all. Then he became the *aakaasha* (space) and gave *avakaasha* (room to move) to all.

After that he got the Gnan that he was the Parabrahm Paramatma. He thought, 'When I thought that I considered others to be dukhi, it was no other *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) who was experiencing dukha; it was I. The individual who went to Brahmaloaka was no other; it was I. I went there with the feeling of being an individual. This feeling of individuality was not diminished in

the shanti of Vaikuntha, in the realm of Hiranyagarbha, or Brahmaloka. I believed others to be dukhi and myself to be sukhi. This bheda was present there. I felt that I was high up in Brahmaloka and others were lower down, in Martyaloka. How can you be sukhi as long as even an ant is dukhi? Even the ant is your Atma. How can you be sukhi as long as dukha exists? I was above; they were below. As long as I felt I am *amara* (undying) in Brahmaloka, and they are below in Martyaloka facing death, I could not be at peace. I was shanta, in Samadhi, and the rest of the people of this world were *ashaanata* (not at peace) and subject to death – this buddhi of mine was absolutely wrong!’

Thus he became one with the *vishvaatmaa* (the Atma of the Vishwa, the whole world), and obtained *sadyo-mukti* (perpetual liberation). When a person goes to Brahmaloka he gets the *krama-mukti* (Mukti by a serial order), but when he merges with the earth he gets Sadyo Mukti.

These two chapters contain a description of Krama Mukti, Sadyo Mukti, Tattvagnan and dhyana of Bhagwan.

Tomorrow I will tell you what comes after this.

Yesterday I told you a little about the matter given in the second canto. It has ten chapters. They give a brief direction about the sadhan a human being should do.

The first two chapters describe the Virat dhyana and Purusha dhyana. This entire creation is in the Ishwara's *anga* (body). Meditating on this will remove raaga-dvesha completely. Meditating on the Purusha makes the *chitta-vritti* (mental inclination) single-pointed.

Dhyana of the Virat is *vairagya-pradhaana* (dominated by detachment), and dhyana of the Purusha is *abhyaasa-pradhaana* (dominated by practice).

Raagopahatirdhyaanam – dhyana is when a person continues to interact in the world, without having raaga-dvesha. This is accepted by the Sankhya Darshan. The followers of Sankhya Darshan say, 'you say that you were the *drashtaa* (uninvolved observer) when you were in Samadhi, and you become the *kartaa* (doer) when you are in *vyavahara* (interaction). If this be the case, you can remember the drashta only when you are in vyavahar. You can only say, "I was a drashta while I was in Samadhi." This is no *viveka* (discrimination; to separate two things that have become mixed) of Sankhya. Therefore, the dhyana of Sankhya is that raaga-dvesha should not touch you even when you interact in the world.'

I will tell you a little about the followers of Sankhya. They do not believe the Atma to be *aananda-svaroop*a (the essence, or true form, of anand). This is extraordinary. They say that if the Atma or Paramatma is anand-swarup, there will be an *aanandaakaara vritti* (a mental inclination of the form of joy), and there will be raaga in it. And, if the person gets raaga – *e`advrittimaanaham* – he will get the feeling, 'I am a person who has this vritti'. He will remain a *parichchinna* (separated) jeeva who has a vritti. He will never experience himself as the Vibhu (all pervading) drashta. The main sadhan is to continue to live in the world without having any raaga-dvesha.'

Somebody asked, 'My brother, where will the Ishwara go? This reasoning creates two divisions – the *nireeshvara* (without an Ishwara) Sankhya, and the *se'shvara* (with an Ishwara) Sankhya.'

Look, my brother, while doing *vichaara* (thinking analytically) I fear neither materialism nor the opinion of the Charvaks who believe that there is nothing except inert matter. I do vichar with both the *naastikataa* (atheist thinking) and *aastikataa* (theist thinking).

The nir-Ishwara Sankhyavadis ask 'Where will your Ishwara stay? Either He will be *drishya* (perceived by the senses) or He will be the drashta. If He is the drashta He is not separate from our Atma, and if He is drishya He goes into the category of Prakriti (Nature; the Ishwara's power of Creation).'

So, the nir-Ishwara Sankhya believes in *vive'ka-khyaati* (separating the Ishwara from Prakriti) with the drishya to be necessary for *asanga* (unattached) vyavhar.

When you use your *sattaa* (pure existence) and say, 'I am', and when you use your Gnan to say, 'I am the drashta'; then why don't you use your *priyataa* (characteristic of being loveable)? Is there a complete absence of love in your life?

This is where the principle of Bhakti begins. If there is indeed any inclination of love in your vyavhar, it has to be connected somewhere. Either you have a *priya-buddhi* (love) for your Atma, or else you have it for the Paramatma. If you develop priya-buddhi for any other than these two, you will be caught in the wheel of raaga-dvesha.

The principle of the Bhagwat is that even Gnan cannot be *poorna* (whole; complete in itself) without the Ishwara's *kripaa* (Grace; compassion).

Anaadyavidyaayuktasya purushasyaatmave'danam,

svato na sambhavaadanyastattvagno gnaanado bhave't.

(11. 22. 10.)

The jeeva is caught in the wheel of *anaadi avidyaa* (eternal nescience; believing the world to be Satya and identifying with the body) from before. Unless and until

he receives Tattvagnan (Gnan about the essence of the non-dual Brahman that is the substratum of all that exists) about his swarup, from another Tattvagna (knower of the Tattva) – *svato na sambhavaadanyastattvagno gnaanado bhavet* – *svayam* (self-obtained) Gnan is not possible. There is no *udaya-vilaya* (arising-fading out) in self-obtained Gnan, and therefore, it is not destroyed either; nor does it rise. Gnan is nitya – eternal – but it needs to be revealed by a person who has it.

Sankhya Darshan believes Gnan to be *raagopahatirdhyaanam* (destroyed by raaga). Yoga Darshan believes Gnan to be *tatra pratyayaikataanaadhyaanam* – when all mental inclinations are focused on the object of dhyana.

I explained the swarup of Krama Mukti and Sadyo Mukti to you. Even after going to Brahmaloaka, the hriday is filled with pain at the sight of people suffering on earth. The *satpurusha* (Mahatmas) do not wish to remain there.

Yachhittatodah kripayaanidamvidaam durantadukhaprabhavaanudarshanaat.

(2.2.34)

When a Satpurusha sees how unhappy people are in this *sansara* (interactive world) of ours, he leaves his air plane and jumps down to the earth – *tato vishe'sham pratipadya nirbhayah* (2. 2. 28). Here, he becomes the form of the earth, then water, fire, air, and space. Then he gets *taadyaatmya* (identification) with the Virat and experiences his swarup.

In this episode it was stated that after he had examined all the Vedas three times, Bhagwan Brahma took this decision:

Bhagavaan brahma kaatsnrye'na triranveekshya maneeshayaa,

tadadhyavasyatkootastho ratiraatman yato bhavet.

(2.2. 34)

There is a buddhi that is used to extract from the Vedas, the points that justify what the mana of the person desires. This is the *manonusaarinee buddhi*. And, there is a buddhi that is *maneeshaanusaarinee* – that, which is in keeping with

the manisha. Where the word manisha is used, it is defined as *manasah eeshaa*, meaning that, which pulls the mana towards the Ishwara. It is the buddhi that inspires the mana towards the Ishwara. Brahmaji studied the Vedas thrice, with manisha buddhi. Then he came to this conclusion:

tadadhyavasyatkootastho ratiraatman yato bhavet.

The principle of the Vedas is that, by which a human being gets *rati* (passionate love) for the Atma, the Paramatma. This is wonderful! Give your attention to this: *ratiraatman yato bhavet* – it is necessary to have rati, but not how rati is obtained. If you can get rati for Bhagwan by crying, cry! If you can get it by reading, read! If you can get it by *yogaabhyasa* (the practice of Yoga), do Yoga! There is no insistence on the method, but the *siddha sthiti* (accomplished state) should be when you have rati.

You should get *aatmaaraamataa* (love for your Atma), *bhagavatraamataa* (love for Bhagwan). There is no difference in the two. Where Bhagwan and the Atma are separate – *brahme`ti paramaatme`ti bhagavaan iti shabdyate`* - the meaning of bhagavadrati and atmarati is the same.

After this, the next two chapters describe the shraddha the *shrotaa* (listener) and the *vaktaa* (speaker) have for Bhagwan's charitra. Raja Parikshit expressed the feelings in his heart, and Shukadevji expressed his. The meaning of this is that both shravan and *kirtana* (singing Bhagwan's glories) are methods for obtaining Bhagwan.

See what comes out of the second canto:

1. To meditate on the Virat and become free of raaga-dvesha.
2. To meditate on the Purusha and induce your vritti to take the form of Bhagwan.
3. To do shravan.
4. To do kirtan.

Raja Parikshit is a *bhagavat* (connected to Bhagwan) in shravan – *mahaabhaagavatatah pareekshita* – Parikshit is a Maha-bhagavat. The *dhyaanee*

(one who does dhyana) of the Virat is a bhagavat, the dhyani of the Purusha is a bhagavat, a person who listens to talks on Bhagwan's charitra is a bhagavat, and one who talks about Bhagwan's charitra is a bhagavat.

The last six chapters are on *manana* (reflection). Manan has two forms: one is *utpatti* (creation) and the other is *upapatti* (demonstrating; establishing). Utpatti means to do vichar with the feeling of *kaarya-kaarana* (karya means the effect that is this world, and karana means the cause) about the world from a worldly viewpoint. Utpatti means that in spite of the feeling of the karya-karana, there is no *parinaama* (result; conclusion) of any kind in the Paramatma; the establishing of the Paramatma's *shuddha* (pure) swarup.

Utpatti is described in three chapters.

1. The utpatti of the jagat.
2. The utpatti of the jeeva.
3. The utpatti (Avatar) of the Paramatma.

The last three chapters – the eighth, ninth, and tenth – describe upapatti. Upapatti means *yukti* (reasoning; logic). To reflect logically, and then establish.

There was a very learned Vedanti. He was also a great *virakta* (having detachment for the world). He refused to talk about anything except the Advaita (the principle of non-duality). I had a lot of shraddha for him. I respected him like my Guru.

One day, during a discussion, he said, 'what is the use of *upaasanaa* (loving worship) of the *saguna* (with attributes) *saakaara* (with form) Ishwara?'

He would vehemently refute the worship of the Ishwara with form and attributes. 'All *roopa* (form; appearance) is *vikaara* (a distortion),' he declared.

I was very bold with him. I was not afraid to voice my thoughts. 'Maharaj,' I said, 'Why do you say *vikaaree* (distorted)? Had Bhagwan's *shareera* (form) been *praakrita* (of Prakriti) it would be vikari. When we say that the Brahman is *sacchidaananda* (sat = pure existence, chit = pure consciousness, and anand = pure joy), why do you call Him vikari? Say, instead, that He is *nitya-nootana* (eternally new)! He glimmers in different forms without giving up His *brahmataa*

(the quality of being the Brahman). There is no actual birth in Him, nor death; everything about Him is nitya-nutan, filled with effulgence. Call Him nitya-nutan – what is the meaning of calling Him *parinaami* (having a result or conclusion) or *vikaaree* (subject to distortion)?’

He was like a Guru to me, but he was strongly opposed to the saguna-sakara. He could not stop himself from refuting the saguna-sakara form of the Paramatma.

‘Look, my brother,’ he said. ‘Up to this day, I have not done vichar on Vedanta from this viewpoint. I want you to come back tomorrow. I will think about Bhagwan’s *vigraha* (form) from this angle, about what the *nir-vikaara* (without distortion) nitya-nutan is. I do vichar only on the fact that that, which is subject to change, is vikar.’

I will tell you something else. This entire Prakriti is subject to change from the viewpoint of Sankhya and Yoga. Raaga-dvesha, however, are not of Prakriti. For those who know this, it is all right; but those who don’t know this should reflect on the principle of Sankhya and Yoga.

Raaga-dvesha are the result of *avive`ka* (lack of discrimination), of *avidyaa* (nescience); and *parivartana* (change; transformation) is of Prakriti. It is natural for things to change. The world keeps changing. However, it is not the *svabhaava* (intrinsic nature) of Prakriti to have raaga-dvesha in this world; it is a mistake of the *manushya* (human being).

Raaga-dvesha comes out of avidya, out of avivek; not from Prakriti. Raaga-dvesha are not the offspring of Prakriti, they are the offspring of *moorkhataa* (foolishness). *Avidyaa kshe`tra uttare`shaam* – avidya, *asmitaa* (pride), raaga, dvesha, and *abhinive`sha* (identification with the body) are a part of avidya. They do not belong to Prakriti. In the opinion of Sankhya, they are not *praakrita* (natural); they are founded in avidya. Had they not been founded in avidya – had they been prakrit – they could never be destroyed!

Narayana! The Shrimad Bhagwat ascertains that this *srishti* (world) is created by the Ishwara, merges into the Ishwara, and is sustained by the Ishwara; therefore, it is nothing that is separate from the Ishwara.

I have told you before, that Madhvacharyaji Maharaj separates the jeeva from the Ishwara. Even the *dvaitavaadee* (those who believe in duality) do not believe the Ishwara to be separate from the jagat; they believe the jagat to be the *vilaasa* (sensual pleasure) of the Ishwara. The Ishwara has, Himself, manifested in the form of the jagat. In life, there is the difference of *svatantrataa* (independence) and *svatantra* (independent), but the jagat is absolutely the form of the Ishwara. This episode is about the reasoning. It is given in the dialogue between Narad and Brahma. This is why Brahmaji said, 'Take a *sankalpa* (formal resolve) of Bhakti, and describe Bhagwan's swarup.' What he said was unique!

*Maayaam varnayatoamushya eeshvarasyaanumodatah,
shrinvatash shraddhayaa nityam maayaayaatmaa na muhyati.*

(2. 7. 53)

Maayaam varnayatoamushya maayayaatmaa na muhyati – describe the Ishwara's *maayaa* (power of illusion). Then, you will not be *mohita* (charmed; deluded) by Maya.'

If you describe the Ishwara's *kaama* (strong desire), you will not be mohit by kama. It is like drawing a longer line next to a line, making the original line look shorter. In the same way, describing the Ishwara's Maya makes the maya of the jeeva appear insignificant. Describing the *raasa-vilaasa* (the sensual pleasure of the Raas Leela with the gopis of Vrindavan) dispatches the desire and lust in humans.

At present, I am not talking about the *siddhaanata* (principle) of the Bhagwat.

Why not?

Ahame`vaasame`vaagre`naanyadyastadasatparam.

(2.9. 32)

The *chatushlokee* (of four shlokas) Bhagwat is given in the second canto. It is to be reflected upon, because it describes the swarup of Bhagwan which is connected to the principle of the Bhagwat.

Think about the different bhagavat charitras that are given in the beginning of the third canto. For example, the charitra of Vidura. Both Vidura and Uddhava are bhagavats. What is the difference between them? You will find it if you pay close attention.

What I mean to say is that there are many types of bhagavats. You should not insist on any one type, saying that a follower of the Bhagwat-Dharma, a bhakta, or a bhagavat purusha can be of one type only.

The Third Canto.

Vidura and Uddhava.

See the kinds of situations that come into the life of human beings. Viduraji did not want to side with either the Kauravas or with the Pandavas. He wanted to fight neither alongside Yudhishtira nor on the side of Duryodhan. An extraordinary form of a bhagavat-purusha, a bhakta of Bhagwan, is described here.

The Armies of the Kauravas and Pandavas were prepared for war. Dhritarashtra was very worried. He was unable to sleep. He sent for Vidura (his step brother), and Vidura gave him *upade'sha* (teaching; advice). Vidura said, 'Your sons are very wicked. They are forms of the Kali Yuga. Give them up. Give Dharmaraj (Yudhishtira) what is his by right.'

Duryodhan, Dushasan, Shakuni and Karma were furious with Vidura for giving such advice. The exact translation of their words is, 'who called this son of a maidservant here? Banish him at once! Send him out of the city and out of the country with his breath and nothing else! *Nirvaasyataamaashu puraachchhvasaanah* (3. 1. 15).'

That means, he should not be allowed to take even clothes, utensils or food with him. He should be allowed to leave alive. That is all.

You may or may not have noticed this: Vidura is also Dharma and Yudhishtira is also Dharma. Dharma had taken two Avatars simultaneously. Nobody on the Kaurava's side heeds the inspiration of Dharma, the teaching of Dharma, or the commands of Dharmas. Here, he is a *shoodra-se'vaka* (a servant of the lowest level).

On the side of the Pandavas, Dharmaraj is the King and everybody obeys his commands. Both sides have Dharma-adharma. It is not that there was no *dushta* (wicked person) in the Pandava's group. There were Rakshasas and Asuras (demoniac races), there was Ghatotkacha (Bhima's son, whose mother was a Rakshasi). However, they were all ruled by Yudhishtira.

In the same way, it is not that Dharma was completely missing in the Kaurava's side. They had Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna, and Vidura; but they were not ruled by Vidura. He was only their servant. The ruler was Duryodhan, who was an Avatar of Kali Yuga. This is the difference in the two sides.

Now, see the *bhagavattaa* (quality of being a bhagavat) of Vidura! He is not merely a *dharmaatmaa* (one who adheres to instituted Dharma); he is a bhagavat. There is a difference between a dharmatma and a bhagavat. Had Vidura been a dharmatma he would have taken his bow and arrows and fought on the side of Yudhishtira. However – *dhanurdvaari nidhaaya* (3. 1. 16) – Viduraji left his weapons at the door of Dhritarashtra's palace when he left.

The meaning of this gesture was, 'I am not going to fight, even on the side of Dharma.'

A human being who is a bhagavat will not accept anything by which his *bhagavadaakaara vritti* (inclination for the form of Bhagwan) disappears. Even if it is the greatest treasure in the world. 'Indra is dying – let us go and help him.'

'Will it disrupt my bhagavadakara vritti if I go to help Indra?' The most important thing in the Bhagwat-Dharma is the inclination for Bhagwan.

Vidura gave up his home. If you give some thought, you will understand how great a sacrifice this was. You may say that lots of people leave their homes and go away. A man leaves his home if he is not allowed to marry the lady he loves. A man leaves his home to make his fortune, or if he wants to become a Sanyasi. What is so great about Vidura leaving his home?

No; the house Vidura gave up was special.

*Yadvaa ayam mantrakridvo bhagavaanakhile`shvarah,
paurave`ndragriham hitvaa pravive`shaatmasaatkritam.*

(3. 1. 2)

'O Raja Parikshit! Shri Krishna – who was the advisor of the Pandavas – did not go to Duryodhan's fabulous palace. He went, uninvited, to Viduraji's house. '

Duryodhan had organized beautiful decorative gates and decorations to welcome Shri Krishna, from the point of the start of Shri Krishna's journey, up to His arrival at Hastinapur. He offered platters of precious gems and jewelry as gifts to Shri Krishna. 'Please stay at my palace,' he said.

'I will not stay at your palace,' said Shri Krishna. 'Nor will I eat at your place. I will go to Vidura's house.'

Shri Krishna said one thing more:

*Sampreeti bhojyaanyanyaani hyaapadbhojayaani vaa punah,
na cha sampreeyate`raajan na chaivaapadaataa vayam.*

'If someone offers food with love, I will eat it. Or, I will eat it if I am starving. However, neither is there prema in your heart, nor am I starving. So why should I eat at your place?'

Vidura had not asked Shri Krishna to go to his house, but Bhagwan went there with the feeling that it was His own house. Vidura was not of a high caste. He was known to be the son of a maidservant. While giving advice to Dhritarashtra – called Vidura Neeti – he said, 'I am talking about worldly interaction. I will not talk about the Vedic viewpoint.' He called the Sanat Kumars to speak on that.

Nobody even dreamed that Bhagwan would go to Vidura's house. When He reached, He found the doors shut, because Vidurani was having her bath. She came hurriedly, still in her wet clothes, when she heard Shri Krishna call out, to open the doors. The Mahabharata's description of Vidura's house is that it was a grand house, but the Bhaktamala says that it was a poor establishment. Vidurani was completely unprepared to receive Bhagwan.

Bhagwan sat down and said, 'I am hungry.' There were no delicacies in the house to offer Bhagwan, but there were some bananas. Vidurani ran to fetch them. She had tears in her eyes. 'How lowly I am, and how great is Bhagwan!' she thought. Her heart overflowed with the thought of the Grace Shri Krishna was showering on her. Tears blinded her. In her excitement she did not realize that she was

offering the peels to Bhagwan, and dropping the bananas! This is how Bhaktimala describes the episode.

Narayana! Viduraji gave up the house that was so special because Bhagwan had come to it, to escape the conflict of Dharma-adharma. It was certainly not easy to leave the house where Krishna came, himself, without even being asked! It was a great sacrifice.

Vidura was a great *bhagavat-pre`mee* (lover of Bhagwan). He went to different *teertha* (places of pilgrimage), living as an *avadhoota* (ascetic), sleeping on the bare ground. His thoughts were focused constantly on Bhagwan.

Then he met Uddhavaji! Uddhavaji is a bhagavat. He is praised in the third canto of the Bhagwat:

Yah panchahaayano maatraa praataraashaaya yaachitah,

tatraichchhadrachayan yasya saparyaa baalaleelayaa.

(3.2.20)

When Uddhavji was five years old he had no interest in playing with toys. He told his mother, 'I want only the image of Shri Krishna.' When his mother called him to come and eat, he would say, 'I have not yet completed my puja. How can I have food?'

I will tell you what Bhagwan's thoughts about Uddhavaji were:

Noddhavoanvapi mannyoono yadgunairnaarditah.

(3.4. 31)

Bhagwan said, 'Uddhava is no less than Me, in any way – *anu api* – he is not even an *anu* – particle – less than Me.'

When Bhagwan made a resolve to wind up His *leelaa* (frolic; play), He thought about how Tattvagnan could be retained in the world after the physical presence of Shri Krishna left it. '*Arhatyuddhava e`vaaddhaa* – only Uddhava can guard the

parampara (traditional handing down from generation to generation) of My Gnan. He is the only eligible person, because – *yad gunairnaarditah prabhuh* (3. 4. 31) – he has not been crushed by *vishaya* (objects of the senses).’

There are so many people in the world – *yaa karoti padaakraantaan bhroovijrimbhe`na ke`valam* (3. 31. 38) – who become enslaved by the mere lifting of a beautiful lady’s eyebrow, or a sidelong glance from her. There have been great warriors, and Kings like Pururva, who were infatuated. They fell on the ground and were ground underfoot by women.

This is not only about women; the same applies to men who affect women in the same way. Sometimes it is the tongue that captivates and sometimes it is the nose or some other of a person’s sensual weakness.

For example, fragrance captivates the nose. It may be rose, or musk, or some other. If there is anything in the world that catches hold of the nose and enslaves a person, it is perfume. Different flavors enslave the tongue – sour, sweet, savory, spicy. Fabrics like silk and velvet ensnare through the sense of touch. Colors enthrall the eye, and sweet sounds capture the ears. All the *indriya* (sense organs) have *vishay* that entice.

It is described in the Shatras:

*Kuranga-maatanga-patanga-bhringa, meenaa hatah panchabhire`va pancha,
e`kah pramaadee sa katham na hanyate`, yah se`vyate` panchabhire`va pancha.*

These five beings have one weakness each, because of which they are destroyed. A deer is captured because of its love for music; an elephant because of its love of touch, a moth because it is attracted to the flame, a bee by honey, and a fish by food. It is natural that a human being who is enticed by five *vishays* will be destroyed if he succumbs to their allure.

Bhagwan said, ‘Uddhava is the only one – *sampratyaatmavataam varah* (3. 4. 30) – who has conquered the weakness of his senses and not succumbed to *vishays*. He is no less than Me in this.’

The Bhagwat uses the words – *vaacho yukti*. This is a reference to the fact that in spite of having sixteen thousand wives, and doing Raas with the gopis of Vrindavan, Shri Krishna had the feeling that He was only playing a game with His own reflection in a mirror.

Re`me`rame`sho vrajasundareebhiryathaarbhakah svapratibimbavibhramah.

(10. 33. 17)

* * * * *

Tamayam manyate`loko hyasangamapi sanginam.

(1. 11. 37)

They are fools, who believe such an *asanga* (uninvolved) person to be *vishayaasakta* (strongly attached to vishays)!

Shri Krishna revealed His own quality when He said, ‘Uddhava is My equal.’

Why is Uddhava Shri Krishna’s equal?

‘Just as vishays fail to captivate Me, they failed to captivate Uddhava.’

Vidura’s quality of being a bhagavat is seen in his rejecting the conflict of Dharma-adharma, and remaining engrossed in *bhagavat-chintana* – thinking about Bhagwan. He even left his beloved home for this.

The Bhagwat-Tattva in Uddhava’s life is his prema for Shri Krishna. It was so strong that vishays failed to sway him. Uddhava obtained knowledge from Vrihaspati – the Guru of the Devtas. He was born as the son of Devbhag, Vasudevji’s brother. His name is given as Vrihadbal in the ninth canto.

Vrihadbal means Brahmabal – the power of the Brahma – *vrihad brahmaiva balam yasya asau vrihad balau*. Uddhava is the main person in the Yadu vansha (Shri Krishna’s lineage). He is Shri Krishna’s friend and Minister. He is such a close friend of Shri Krishna that Bhagwan sends him to the gopis.

If you wish to connect this to *maanava-jeevana* (the life of humans) you will see how many qualities can come into a person. You should not lose hope. You should not feel sad. *Yuva aashishto dridhashthah* – there should be zeal in your life. You should have hope. You should be firm in your resolve, and you should forge ahead.

Uddhavaji was the highest category of bhagavats. He was initiated in *pre`ma* (pure love) by the gopis. He obtained knowledge about the Shastras from Vrihaspati. Bhagwan Shri Krishna Himself gave him Bhagvatgnan, Brahmagnan, and Tattvagnan. No *apoorntaa* (absence of wholeness) was seen in Uddhavaji's life.

The Yadu vanshis were divided into two groups. The Mahabharata exposes this clearly. Uddhavaji had the task of managing them. That means, the Gnan in a person's life has three forms in social interaction. One is the general knowledge, like that of the Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains; the Darshans like Nyaya, Sankhya, Yoga, Vaisheshik, Vedanta, Mimansa, and the Bhakti Shastras. There should be some basic idea about them.

There is one special Gnan into which a person should go deep. And the third Gnan a person should have is the *samanvaya gnaana* – the knowledge of how to unite and consolidate. All the streams should be brought together so that life progresses in the right direction, towards one goal. Uddhavaji was very skillful in governing the Kingdom. A small river merges into a big river and reaches the ocean. The small river will attain its goal.

Vrihatsahaayah kaaryaantam kshodeeyaanapi gachchhati.

Even the smallest person can achieve great things by taking the help of someone great.

Sambhooyaambhodhimabhye`ti mahaanadyaa nagaapagaah.

Even a small stream can reach the sea if it merges into a great river.

'That is why You should first meet Yudhishtira.' This was the advice Uddhavaji gave to Shri Krishna, uniting the two factions in the Yaduvansha. Even the groups

that wanted Jarasandha to be killed first agreed that this was a better policy. Shri Krishna should meet Yudhishtira and then go with Bhima and Arjuna, to kill Jarasandha.

It was one of Uddhavaji's great qualities to be able to reconcile people and unite them when their opinions clashed. He had prema, he had the ability to unite, and he had Statesmanship. He also had Brahmagnan, and he followed Shri Krishna's wishes in everything.

Viduraji had left everything at his own wishes, but Uddhavaji did not leave voluntarily; he was sent. I am speaking about a special feature in the Bhagwat, in the Bhagwat-Dharma. Vidura's bhakti is *gnaana-pradhaana* (dominated by Gnan) and Uddhava's Gnan is *bhakti-pradhaana* (dominated by Bhakti).

Vidura is also a Gnani. I will explain when we come to the episode of the gopis, and discuss *shuddha pre`ma* (love unsullied by personal considerations). Vidura is a bhakta whose Gnan and *tyaaga* (renunciation) dominate; whereas Uddhavaji is a Gnani in whom Bhakti dominates. Uddhavji's bhakti is mixed with Gnan; Viduraji's Gnan is mixed with Bhakti. The third canto starts by describing these two. In between, there is a description of how Brahmaji created the world. There is also a description of how nothing exists except the Paramatma.

Kardam and Devhuti.

I will tell you another *drishti* (viewpoint; vision). Kardam is a bhagavat and so is Kapil. We should do *vive`ka* (discriminate) between them, and examine the difference, and then know their oneness. When *e`katva* (oneness) is accepted without doing the analysis, it becomes an emotional acceptance. When the difference between two objects is understood first, it is *tattvaatmaka* (established as the element). There is an understanding of the essential.

Kardam and Devhuti are both bhagavat, and Bhagwan Kapil is their son, having their combined qualities. Since Bhagwan Kapil is their son, had they not both been bhagavats and bhaktas, why would Bhagwan take an Avatar as their son? However, a great difference is seen between Devhuti and Kardam.

Brahma commanded Kardam Prajapati (King of the people) to have a son. Countless children are born in this world. They grow up and get married, and have children. But, what is the use of having children who – *jaato vaa na chiranjeeve`d, jeeved vaa durable`ndriyah* – they get children after a long wait, and the children are short-lived. Or, if they are not short-lived – even if they have a long life – they are *durbale`ndriya* – their limbs and senses are weak – weak eyes, a weak heart and a weak intellect!

Ayur Veda says: *oonashodashavarshaayaamapraaptah pancha-vinshatih, yadyaadyatte` pumaan garbhah kukshisthah sa vipadyate`*. *Jaato vaa na chiranjeeve`d jeeve`d vaa durable`ndriyah*. If the age of the husband and wife is less than twenty-five years when she becomes pregnant – *kukshisthah sa vipadyate`* - there is a risk of a miscarriage, or else, the child may be short-lived, or physically weak.

People in earlier times were not in such haste to have children! They had self-restraint. They were *tapasvee* (practiced restraint of the senses and body). Kardam said, 'My father has ordered me to have a son. I will practice *tapasyaa* (asceticism) first, in order to strengthen my *veerya* (seminal fluid) and inner shakti, and get *pragnaa* (intelligence combined with wisdom). A child that is born from a *veerya* that is enriched with *pragna* will be a child of a high caliber.

He went to Siddhapur, where the lake called the Bindu Sarovar is, in Gujarat, and did *tapasya*. Bhagwan was pleased with his *tapasya* and gave him Darshan (appeared before him). Two drops fell from Bhagwan's eyes as He looked at Kardamji, and that became the Bindu Sarovar. It is pervaded by the river Saraswati, but we will not go into the details now.

Bhagwan told Kardam, 'You will get married. Manuji will come with his wife Shataroopa, and their daughter Devhuti. You will get married to Devhuti.'

Kardam and Devhuti got married, and Devhuti gave birth to Bhagwan Kapil. Bhagwan Kapil is accepted as an incarnation of Bhagwan Vishnu.

Just recently, I spoke on the Bhagwat at Anaandmayi Ma's ashram for fifteen days. This episode came – *vishrambhe`naatmashauche`na* (3. 23. 2) – describing how Devhuti did *se`vaa* (rendered service) to her husband.

A rich landowner used to come daily. He had taken a *sankalpa* (formal resolve) to hear the whole Bhagwat. He came to me and said, 'Swamiji, please will you write this description for me, about Devhuti's prema and seva for Kardam Rishi? I will get it published. I have never heard such a beautiful description of Dharma and prema between a husband and wife.' What he meant was that he had never noticed this, because he was a man of great learning.

What is the first point given in this? Let me tell you about that first. *Vishrambhe`na* – meaning, having *vishvaasa* (faith, trust, and confidence). How did Devhuti serve Kardam? She served him with vishwas.

What will happen if there is no vishwas between a husband and wife? Then, there will be *aaga* (fire; burning). There can be no prema if there is no vishwas. Prema is not writing love notes in a park! That is not the method of creating true love.

Prema comes from vishwas. Vishwas is the father of prema. Prema will be present when both have vishwas for each other. A very good point is given here – *te`jeeyaansamatoshayat* (3. 23. 30) – at first, Kardamji did not know about the proper interaction between a husband and wife. He had lived alone in the forest, doing tapasya. He had no idea about the norms of social behavior. A person who does not bother about the wishes of others will never be successful in life. It is not that we deal with machines, pressing a button to activate it to do what we want! We have to deal with people, who have their own preferences and problems. If we don't give some consideration to their wishes, why will they bother about our wishes?

Devhuti, however, gave full consideration to Kardamji's wishes. Kardamji was a very *te`jasvee* (having a brilliant personality) *muni* (sage). He was not easy to please. Devhuti served him with great care and diligence. He was pleased with her efforts to help him in his tapasya.

So, one thing is that Devhuti had vishwas in her heart. She was *pavitra* (pure in her mind and intentions). She had *dama* (self-restraint) and she was obedient. She had all the virtues, and she lived with Kardam Muni with a heart unsullied by any worldly consideration, and she lived with great purity.

The vanshas of their daughters flourished, and Bhagwan Kapil came as their son. What was the difference between them?

Gnan was predominant in Kapildev's Bhakti, and *sne`ha* (love) was predominant in Devhuti's Bhakti for Kapildev.

One thing is very clear in the Shrimad Bhagwat. Kardamji did Bhagwan's *aaraadhanaa* (loving worship) at first, but when his daughters were born and then Kapil Bhagwan manifested as his son, he said, 'Enough, Maharaj! Now that You have come, You please stay in the house. I am leaving.'

It is unthinkable that Bhagwan comes in an Avatar as his son, and the father won't take Him into his lap and shower love on him! Moreover, he will leave his Bhagwan and go away! Kardamji said, 'I am going to attain the *braahmishthiti* (the state of one who has obtained the Brahman).'

Kapildevji gave His assent. 'Go. You will take Sanyas and get the experience that the Atma is in all beings, and all beings are in the Atma. This creation is in the Brahman and the Brahman is in all creation. It is one in many and many in one. It is the swarup of My Tattvagnan – *avibhaktam vibhakte`shu*.'

This is Gnan. *Vignaana* (acquired Gnan) is that only one exists, in the multiplicity of this world.

Avibhaktam vibhakte`shu tad gnaanam viddhi saattvikam.

(Gita 18. 20)

To see the *e`kataa* (oneness) in the *ane`kataa* (multiplicity) is true Gnan.

Kardamji Maharaj went away to get the darshan of the Paramatma. He left Kapil, and Kapil left Devhuti. This is the difference between them.

Devhuti did not leave Kardamji or Kapilji. After Kapilji left – *gnaatatattvaapyabhoonnashte`vatse` gauriva vatsalaa* – she was distressed like a cow who has lost her newborn calf.

Thus, Devhuti's Gnan is dominated by Bhakti and Kardamji's Bhakti is dominated by Gnan. These are two types of bhagavats shown here.

You are aware that I am not speaking on the Bhagwat in the normal style of going serially from chapter to chapter. I am placing before you some points about how useful the Bhagwat-Dharma is, for the life of a human being, for manav jeevan.

Actually, our vichar about the Shrimad Bhagwat is – *skandhe`, adhyaaye`, prakarane`, shloke`, vaakye`, pade`, akshare` - saptadhaa vibhajannartha* – we do vichar on the Bhagwat in seven stages.

These are, the canto (skanda), chapter (adhyaya), topic (prakaran), verse (shloka), statement (vakya), word (pada) and letter (akshara).

*Skandhe`adhyaaye` prakarane` shloke` vaakye` pade`akshare`,
saptadhaa vibhajannartham shreemadbhaagavatam vade`t.*

Vopadev was a great pundit and a contemporary of the famous poet Himadri. He has written three essays on the Shrimad Bhagwat. One of them is called Harileelamrita and another is called Muktafalam. In these essays, Vopadev has declared that if anyone wants to alter even a single letter in the Shrimad Bhagwat, it cannot be done. This is about a single letter; there is no scope for altering, removing or adding a single letter, leave alone a word or phrase!

Thus, the chapters in the cantos, the topics in the chapters, the verses in the chapter, the statements in the verses, the words in the statements, and the letters in the words are placed with such meticulous calculation, with every syllable calculated with perfect precision, that any change in a letter, word, statement, verse, topic, chapter or canto will immediately be exposed. The style of the Sanskrit language is unique!

Those who read English or other languages do not have an understanding of the intricacies of Sanskrit grammar. I will give you an example.

A *shaastraartha* (theological discussion) was held between the representatives of the Arya Samaj and the Sanatan Dharma. The Pundit who represented the latter was a seasoned man. The Arya Samaji Pundit placed a mantra of the Vedas for

discussion. '*Na tasya pratimaa asti*' – meaning, It (the Brahman) has no *pratimaa* (image or idol). Here, the meaning of pratima is *tulanaa* (comparison) or *upamaa* (simile). That means there is nothing that can be compared with the Brahman.

The other pundit did not know whether the meaning of pratima was upama or tulana in this context. The normal meaning of pratima is clear. A pratima is a *moorti* – a statue. The Pundit applied its meaning as a statue. '*Natasya pratimaa asti*', '*natasya nabhreebhootasya vaamanasya pratimaa asti.*' In place of *na tasya*, he made it *natasya*. He combined *na* (not) *tasya* (of that), and made it *natasya* (to bow down to).

The Arya Samaji Pundit did not have a good grounding of Sanskrit grammar. He did not know what this meant. Vedic Pundits were sent for. When they came, they started, '*na-na-na tasya-tasya-tasya, na tasya-na tasya-na tasya, pratimaa-pratimaa-pratimaa asti-asti-asti.*' The *jataa paatha* and *ghana paatha* (methods of uttering) started. The *na* was separated completely from *tasya*. No scope was left for changing the meaning in any way!

The method of the Sanskrit language is the method of tapasya. The Mahatmas did tapasya all life long, to keep the language safe from distortion. Thus, there is an impeccable arrangement of the canto, chapter, topic, verse, statement, word, and letter. It is not possible for us to say that even a letter can be changed, removed, or added.

The pledge is made earlier, that the Bhagwat is a fruit that is to be consumed fully. It has no seeds and no peel.

*Nigamakalpatarorgalitam falam shukamukhaadamritadravasamyutam,
pibata bhaagavatam rasamaalayam muhuraho rasikaa bhuvi bhaavokaah.*

(1. 1. 3)

The Bhagwat is such a wonderful fruit that it contains only *rasa* (sweetness). It has no peel or seed that can be discarded. Not even a drop of this fruit is to be wasted. One has to be very alert

I am not telling you about the principle of the Bhagwat at present. Nor am I discussing the *stuti* (eulogy) or *upade'sha* (teaching; sermons). The principle ascertained in the Bhagwat is marvelous!

Ahame`vaasame`vaagre`naanyadyatsatparam.

(2. 9. 3)

What is the swarup of the Brahman? What is the swarup of the Paramatma? It is only *nirvishe'sha sanmaatra* (pure existence that has no distinguishing qualities).

What is the swarup of *maayaa* (the Ishwara's power of illusion)? It is to quiet the *ananta* (infinite), and show the multiplicity as one.

What is the swarup of the *jagat* (world)? It is that, in which the *vyavasthaa* (arrangement; order) of *kaarya-kaarana* (effect-cause) is not possible. The karana results in the karya, and the karya results in the karana.

You know that originally, there was Prakriti (the Ishwara's power of Creation; Nature). It then turned into the five elements – the pancha bhoota. That is why we say that Prakriti is first the karana – the cause; and the jagat is the karya – the effect.

Some say, the jagat exists at present. Later it will become Prakriti. Therefore, the jagat is first.

There are two results of karana – one is the *anuloma parinaama* (the natural result) and the other is the *pratiloma parinaama* (the contrary or inverted result). From the viewpoint of the pratiloma parinam the multiplicity is the karana, and the Prakriti that is *e`kataa* (oneness) is the karya. And, from the viewpoint of the anuloma parinam there is one Prakriti which is the karana, and the world of multiplicity is the karya. Thus, it is impossible to establish a vyavastha of karya-karana; it is *anirvachaneeya* (that, which cannot be defined accurately).

When a *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) understands himself to be one with the Paramatma, the impression of *dvaita* (duality) is removed

completely. So, instead of speaking on the principle of the Bhagwat, I want to tell you the incidents and episodes that are related to manav-jeevan.

The relationship between a husband and wife is *ape`kshita* (of dependence). You can make every effort to cultivate the habit in a baby to sleep alone, but as soon as he grows a little, he will try to come to his mother. When he is a little older, he will want the company of other children. Prakriti wants harmony. Solitude is not a natural tendency in general. It is a different matter when people overcome their natural inclination and become hermits.

It is seen that people who live in forests get attached to animals and birds. They play with them. They get *mamataa* (possessive love) for trees. Two Sadhus quarrel over the tree under which they want to sit. 'I live under this tree. You can go and live under some other tree.' The tree is like a friend to them.

The process of the world is that attraction and repulsion are present even in *jada padaartha* (inert matter). Iron is attracted to a magnet – this is the attraction of the *jada* (inert). There is a kind of water lily that blooms only in moonlight. This is the attraction of the *jada*.

Animals also have their natural friendships and enmities. When astrologers match the horoscopes of a boy and girl for a marriage proposal, to see if they are compatible, they see who is a *manushya yoni* (having human tendencies), *pashu yoni* (having animal tendencies) and *de`va yoni* (having divine tendencies). They match the *gana* (group).

Under the circumstances, the married life of a couple is essential for the tradition and continuity of the people. The Shrimad Bhagwat describes several episodes where the wife captured her husband's heart. This is called *manograhana* –she caught his mana.

How did she catch his mana?

If a wife demands, right from the start of married life, 'It is my right; you have to give me you mana', it will not work. Neither can be forced to give the mana to the other. When we give our mana to someone, both hearts merge and become one.

And, after we unite we can gently draw our mana in one direction, and the mana of the other will automatically be drawn along. Sometimes, his mana is drawn towards hers and sometimes her mana is drawn towards his. Life progresses with *saamanjasya* (cooperation; harmony).

A *vikata* (fearsome; forbidding) Rishi like Kardam – I told you yesterday, that Manuji had gone himself, and given his daughter Devhuti to him in marriage. He also gave wealth and many valuable objects.

I will also tell you this, because both the son and the daughter are children of the same parents. People are often under the impression that the son is the heir to their wealth; not the daughter. That is an absolutely wrong impression. The *vyavasthaa* (arrangement) in our ancient times was that if the *achala sampatti* (immovable wealth) were to be divided, it would make the son-in-law a competitor of the son. So they kept the immovable wealth for the son and gave movable wealth to the son-in-law. The right of the daughter should be given to her at the time of her marriage. She should, furthermore, periodically be given appropriate amounts in lieu of interest after her marriage. The full rights of the daughter should reach her home.

So, Manu and Shataroopa gave the *paaribarha* (dowry) to Devhuti. Dowry is called *dahe`ja* in Hindi. It is not dahej; it is *daayaja*. The word in Sanskrit is *daaya* (that, which is owed). The Yagyavalkya Smriti describes a *daaya-bhaaga*, meaning, who is entitled to what. *Daayaja* means that the wealth that is hers by right should be given into her hands when the daughter gets married. This is the property of the girl.

Manu and Shataroopa gave a lot of wealth to Devhuti and went away. After they left, Devhuti had to live with a man she did not know. She did not know him or love him. In foreign countries, the meaning of prema is physical union. In our country it means mental union. We do not consider physical union to be prema.

Pitribhyaam prasthite`saadhvee patim ingitakovidaa.

(3. 23. 1)

Devhuti's virtues are described next. The first point is that Devhuti did not need to be told what Kardam Rishi wanted. *Ingita kovidaa* – she understood the slightest indication. There was no need for him to speak. That means she did not disturb his *bhajana* (loving meditation of Bhagwan) in any way.

And, she was full of *saujanya* (good-will). She was alert, and eager to arrange for his every convenience. She served him diligently with *prema*. This is essential in marriage. If I elaborate on every one of Devhuti's qualities, all the time will be spent in this!

*Vishrambhe`na aatmashauche`na gaurave`na dame`na cha,
shushrooshayaa sauhride`na vaachaa madhurayaa cha bho.*

(3. 23. 2)

It is wrong, when a woman gets irritated with her husband for coming home late. He may have been unable to get a bus or taxi, and had to walk. Very often, women become suspicious that the husband is late because he has gone to some wrong place. The poor man is tired and harassed. At times he has been rebuked by his senior at the office, or faced a loss in his business, or some other problem. There should be *vishwas* – *vishrambhe`na*.

And *pavitrataa*, meaning purity. Women dress up, get a stylish hairstyle, and go out to impress the people in the village. When they are at home they don't bother to comb their hair or wear a clean sari. The home is badly managed. They speak with great sweetness when outsiders come, but they speak rudely to the people at home. This is not the method for increasing *prema*, or creating *sukha* at home. *Gaurave`na dame`na* – to be pure always, and to have *gaurava-bhaava*.

Gaurav-bhava means, in our Indian tradition we do not give importance to fulfilling the desires in our heart. We give importance to *chaaritra* – the behavior and the character of a person. Our *charitra* (character and conduct) should be *shuddha* (pure). The *charitra* becomes pure by living according to the rules of Dharma, and it becomes impure when a person lives according to his *vaasanaa*

(strong desires). The charitra is of two kinds: *shaasanaanusaaree* (following the rules) and *vaasanaanusaaree* (following desires).

Therefore, there should be some senior in our home, before whom we curtail our vasanas. If you go on fulfilling your desires, you will acquire pride. Your desires will increase, your demands will increase, and you will get dukha when you are unable to fulfill your desires.

The method of increasing dukha is to increase desires. The word gaurav means, to consider someone be greater than you. When you consider someone to be your superior or senior – you can consider your husband to be your senior – it is called gaurav-bhava. It means having a feeling of respect. If you give respect you get respect. If you show disrespect, you receive disrespect. You should give what you want to get.

Na tatparasya sandadhyaat pratikoolam yadaatmanah.

You should not do to others that, which you don't want to be done to you.

And, *dame`na* – you should be able to restrain your senses. It is not that you say whatever comes to your mind.

One day, a young lady complained to me that her husband wrote very dry letters to her. 'The letters my friend's husband writes are very loving,' she said. I told her, 'Your husband has depth and gravity. You should feel happy that he does not make light of his love by writing about it in a letter. That is not what a man of depth does. Your respect for him should increase because of this.'

She was struck by this viewpoint. 'Oh, is that the case?' she asked thoughtfully.

'Yes,' I said. 'It is gravity and depth, because his love is too deep to be expressed lightly.'

You see, girls these days do not understand these things. They think that unless the husband calls her 'darling' he doesn't love her!

So, *dame`na cha* – Devhuti also had self-restraint. There is one point to be considered. If you allow your *bhoga-vaasanaa* (strong desire for sensual

pleasures) to be excessive, your shakti for bhoga will weaken gradually. And, when your ability to indulge is diminished, the habits of bhoga you have acquired will give you dukha.

If, however, your indriyas are controlled – for example, you say something after giving due consideration of what is right and proper – the name of this in Sanskrit is *aaryaata* – your speech will be Dharma. People say ‘idea’ – *aayataam parinaamee*: what will be the effect of what I say on the person to whom I speak, and on others? This should be considered before saying something.

That means:

1. What will be the effect on me?
2. What will be the effect on the person I say it to?
3. What will be the effect on someone who hears what I say?

Unless these points are considered before you say something, it is not the proper method of speech.

Boliye` to taba boliye`kee reeti jaano.

Speak when you know the method of speech.

So, *sushrooyaa sauhride`na* – you should do *se`vaa* (render service), and you should always keep your heart pure. Never let the purity of your heart get sullied. People get upset if five rupees are wasted. Which do you prefer? You do not even notice that your *dila* (heart) is more precious than thousands, or lakhs, of rupees!

I heard that a couple wanted to go and see a cinema. The wife was very excited. ‘I will dress in green today,’ she said. She put on a green sari, green bangles and a green bindi. When she went to put on her slippers she realized she didn’t have green slippers. She sat down. ‘I cannot go to the cinema,’ she told her husband. ‘I do not have green slippers to match my clothes.’ She began to cry. The program was cancelled. The lack of green slippers created dukha in the home.

My brother, married life is meant to create sukha; not dukha! Food is cooked so we get tasty and nutritious food. If the food is poison, the entire effort of cooking

is futile. So, worldly life should contain a feeling of seva. The fragrant heart should always be kept beautiful and sweet; it should never turn sour.

Vaachaa madhurayaa cha bhoh. I was at Ahmadabad once, to attend a *sabhaa* (conference). One Sadhu began to say something *kadavaa* (bitter). It was a committee meeting. Bhagwadacharyaji was present. All the Mahatmas present were senior Monks. Bhagwadacharyaji told the Sadhu, 'Take one advice from me. Keep a bottle of honey in your pocket at all times. Whenever you want to say something, put two drops of honey on your tongue before you begin to speak.'

Everyone present started smiling. The bitterness was removed. The meaning of *madhurayaa* is *madhu* (honey), or *madhuraatiksharati* (dripping with sweetness). Your speech should be such that it sounds like honey dripping into the ears of whoever hears you.

When a person vomits, he vomits out what he has eaten. There is a very good word for it in Sanskrit – *vyaahaara*. What you take in from outside is *aahaara* and when something is thrown out, it is *vyahara*. *Vyahara* is the opposite of *ahara*.

Speech is a display of what you consume; meaning, *vyahara* reveals what you have imbued, read, heard, thought, etc. If you have imbued something bitter you will throw out bitterness, and if you have imbued something sweet, sweetness will come out of your mouth. So, your speech should always be *madhur*.

I draw your attention to this point, because it is not something that is commonly observed. The Shastras say that it is Dharma to speak *satya* (the truth), but that is not a comprehensive statement. Those of you who do not know this can listen to the definition. If they have doubts, they can do *vichar*, or ask for clarification.

If a husband and wife come out of their room, and the mother or father ask them casually what they were doing, should they speak the truth shamelessly? On such occasions they should evade the question and talk of something else. Here, it is not Dharma to speak the truth; it is Dharma to speak an *asatya* in case an answer is unavoidable. This is the true meaning of *satya*.

It is *adharma* (that, which is contrary to Dharma) to speak *asatya* (tell lies). To speak is not always Dharma; *mauna* (remaining silent) is also Dharma. Combine the two. It is Dharma to speak and it is also Dharma to remain silent. An arrangement has to be made, about when it is right to speak and when it is right to remain silent. One should never give up what is appropriate.

That is why Manuji has said:

*Satyam brooyaat priyam brooyaat na brooyaat satyamapriyam,
priyam cha naanritam brooyaat e`sha dharma sanaatanah.*

Satyam brooyaat priyam brooyaat – speak the truth but say what is pleasant. The condition of *priya* – that, which is pleasing – is added to *satya*. Speak the truth but don't say things that are hurtful. *Na brooyaat satyamapriya*, - don't speak the truth that is *apriya* (unpleasant; hurtful). Never speak a hurtful truth. *Priyam cha naanritam brooyaat* – speak what is pleasant, but don't tell lies. *E`sha dharma sanaatanah* – this is the eternal Dharma.

So, the Dharma of the *vaanee* (speech) is that *auchitya* (what is appropriate) should never be given up. What you say should be appropriate. It should be *satya* and it should be *hita* (beneficial) – beneficial for us as well as for the other. And, it should be *mita* – brief. Say what you want to, in short; and say it in a way that does not hurt or offend. *Satya, hita, mita, priya*, and *avasorichita* (appropriate to the occasion).

If you are having a meal with some people, and one of them starts to talk about the effect of the laxative he had taken the previous evening, it may be the absolute truth, but still, it will be wrong to speak about it. There is a Dharma even about speaking the truth! You have to keep in mind the time, topic, necessity, and suitability of what you talk about. Speak if it is necessary to say something. If you don't need to talk about it, why waste your faculty of speech?

Thus, speech should be truthful, beneficial, brief, pleasant, necessary, and suitable for the occasion. If it is possible to delay giving bad news – delay the

dukha the bad news will cause – by a few hours, do so. My grandfather taught me this when I was a child.

The ladies of the family were having their lunch. Someone brought the news of the passing away of a relative. My grandfather read the telegram. I also read it since I was sitting beside him. ‘Keep quiet about this,’ he told me. ‘Let the finish eating, and then tell them. Otherwise, they will start weeping. They will not be able to eat.’ This is called appropriate to the occasion.

I had a friend at Varanasi. Later he became the Principal of the Queen’s College. In those days, it was a college; later it became a University. He was sitting for his examinations for his Master’s in Sanskrit grammar. A telegram came, ‘Come home at once. Your wife is critical.’ The examination was over five days. The telegram came on the first day. His father was with us. ‘Listen to me,’ he told me. ‘Don’t tell him about the telegram. Go to my house and see if his wife is indeed unwell. That will take three days. When you come back, two days will be left. Even if his wife passes away, we will not tell him till the examination is over.’ This is what he said.

He sent me off. When I reached their home, his wife was absolutely fine. An enemy had sent the telegram to ruin my friend’s career.

So, what we say should be well considered before we rush into hasty speech.

Visrija kaamam dambham cha dve`sham lobhamagham madam.

(3. 23. 3)

Six things should not be there: *kaama* (avid desire), *dambha* (deceit), *dve`sha* (hatred), *lobha* (greed), *paapa* (sin), and *mada* (pride; arrogance).

Today, I am telling you a broad outline of things. If you lose your *vishvaasa* (faith; trustworthiness) at home – if people start thinking, ‘this person is a *dhongee* (hypocrite), people will not believe you even when you say you are unwell. You may groan in pain, but they will think you are pretending. You will get neither medication nor sympathy. You won’t get food even if you are hungry. It is a very bad thing to get a bad reputation about yourself.

I was at the house of Bhaiji, Hanuman Prasadji once. I have many memories of those days. One day, his wife went into a huff. I asked their daughter – she was about ten years old at that time; I had officiated as the priest when she got married – why her mother was sulking. ‘Is it because she wants something – a sari or some jewelry?’ I asked.

‘What things you say!’ she said scornfully. I lived at their house like one of the brothers. I took *sannyasa* (the vows of renunciation) at Gorakhpur, from the family of Hanuman Prasadji Poddar. I had left my own family many years ago. This was my new family.

What am I to tell you? The girl said, ‘Can my mother ever be upset about any need or her own? She never goes into a huff because of her own inconvenience or suffering! Today, Bhaiji has not brushed his teeth, or had his milk. He hasn’t taken his bath. He kept talking to people and he will get a headache in the afternoon. My mother is upset because he is delaying, and his health will suffer.’

The principle of showing displeasure is not based on wanting something for our self. It is for the sukha of the beloved.

This is what the prema of Radha and Krishna teaches us, or the prema of the gopis and Shri Krishna. We should not be selfish. We should not have pride. We should be prepared to face any dukha rather than let a hair of the head of the Beloved be harmed. This is the lesson we learn from the lives of the gopis.

*Yatte` sujaatacharanaamburuham stane`shu bheetaah shanaih priya dadheemahi
karkashe`shu,*

*te`naataveematasi tad vayathate`na kinsvit koorpaardibhirmati
dheerbhavadaayushaam nah.*

(10. 31. 19)

‘We are not weeping because we get great sukha if You meet us; we are weeping because of the thought that some sharp stone or tuft of grass may hurt Your lotus feet in the darkness of the night. We fear You may be entangled in some wild

vines in the dense forest. We are prepared to suffer the pain of Your absence all life long, but we want You to be well and happy.'

This *shikshaa-deekshaa* (teaching – initiation) is the special feature of the Bhagwat-Dharma. And, it is something that is extremely useful in our life. There are no schools for teaching prema, but this is the Bhagwat-Dharma that has opened such a school for us! Prema comes from the heart. The episode of the prema of the gopis for Shri Krishna in the Bhagwat teaches us what prema is. Learn from this, how to give prema.

Apramattodyataa nityam te`jeeyaansamatoshayat. (3. 23. 3) – never allow *pramaada* (carelessness; frenzy) to come into your mind. 'Oh! I forgot!' This is pramad. Pramad is not remembering something in time. It has not the slightest connection with Bhakti, Yoga, or Vedanta. It belongs totally to Tamo guna – the tendency of sloth and deluded thinking.

A highly respected Acharya came to me one day. He was an Acharya (a degree of the level of M.A.) in seven subjects, and he was a Brahmachari (avowed celibate), from Punjab. His name was Haridattaji. I told one of the men at the Ashram to prepare a certain room for him to stay at, and see to his comfort, meals, milk, bath etc. He escorted Haridattaji out of my room.

Next morning, when Brahmachariji came to my room, I asked if he has slept well, had his dinner and whether he faced any inconvenience. 'Yes, oh yes! Everything was fine,' he replied. The way he spoke aroused some doubt in my mind. I called the man I had delegated to see to his arrangements, and asked him. 'Oh, Swamiji, I forgot!' he said. 'I took him to his room and then I went home. I completely forgot about his bath, food, and milk.'

Now, is this pramad not an *aparaadha* (offence)? The man did not remember his duties. Such behavior is not connected to Gnan in any way. Yoga means, to be alert, to be constantly vigilant. It is not Yoga to shut your eyes and forget what you have to do, or to make your mind dull. Yoga is to be alert and watchful.

That means, there should be no pramad. There should be *udyama* (effort; enterprise). A person does not get tired by the method of the Shastras. Fatigue is a

false thing. 'Oh, I feel fed up!' The fact is people get tired of things. There is a shloka in the Vishnu Purana.

Japa shraantashchare`ddhyaanam dhyaanashaantashchare`jjapam,

Japa dhyaanaparishraantah aatmatattvam vichaaraye`t.

Where is shanti in this? If your mana loses interest in *japa* (ritual chanting), sit and do dhyana. There is no need to move your finger or tongue for the *japa*. The mana will become *nirvishaya* (free of sense objects), because the action of doing *japa* resulted in the mind wanting *nishkriyataa* (inactivity). You will become immersed in dhyana.

If someone says, 'leave *japa* and do dhyana,' you will feel lazy at first. Very well; what if the mana is too restless to do dhyana? *Dhyaanshraantashchare`jjapam* – then, take up your *maalaa* (prayer beads)!

Someone may say, 'my mana settles on neither *japa* nor dhyana.'

Come, study the Upanishads. Change the subject. If the mana feels tired of one activity, change the activity. You read books on Darshan Shastras. After some time, the eyes start burning. Pick up a book on poetry, and the fatigue will vanish. When poetry no longer holds your attention, pick up a novel. If the novel is not interesting, read something humorous!

When does the mana feel tired? The mana is not something to be taken for granted. It stays alert. It moves with great speed. Don't experience mental fatigue!

Apramattodyataa nityam te`jeeyaansamatoshatat.

(3. 23. 3)

When do you feel sleepy? It is when you are bored. When are you bored? When do you experience *tandraa* (dozing off)? It is when you are bored.

Kshaamaam karshitaam vratacharyayaa.

(3. 23. 5)

Kshaamaam – it is not that Devhuti became fat. Even in earlier times, the *avadhoota* (possessionless Monks) were plump. Dattatreya has been described as *peebaa*, meaning fat, in the Shrimad Bhagwat. People who work hard are thin and wiry. Fat people tend to be indolent. If I were to do *dandavat pranaam* (prostrate full length) to show respect, my stomach will begin to pain! I tell them, ‘You are thin and wiry. You can do dandvat pranam if you want, but I am unable to do this, so forgive me, please!’

Devhuti was thin and active. As long as Kardamji was there, and Kapilji was there – Kardamji left shortly after Kapilji was born – Devhuti’s Gnan was mixed with Bhakti. Bhakti was sprinkled on Kardamji’s Gnan, like salt sprinkled on food. Kardamji’s life was dominated by Gnan. Devhuti’s life was dominated by Bhakti, with Gnan sprinkled over it. She became *jeevana-mukta* (liberated; free of the identification with the body). She gave up the wonderful *vimaana* (air ship) Kardamji had created for her when Kapilji left. This air ship was unimaginably luxurious. It had more facilities than even Swarga has. There were thousands of people to serve her. Devhuti gave up this fabulous air ship when her son left.

The fact is, a human being does not want a palace – he wants the ones he loves and the things he values. Some twenty years ago, the laborers of the Birla Mills at Gwalior took me to their quarters. Their quarters comprised of one room with a verandah for each couple. The rent for this was one and a half rupees per month. This was where they lived, cooked, and slept.

‘How can we ask Swamiji to stay in such quarters?’ they thought. They requested a rich man to put us up at his mansion. Dada and one or two others were with me. The people took us to the mansion and went away. There was a huge bed, a spacious bathroom and a well furnished suite.

Now, they left us there and went away. Who were we to talk to? The owner of the mansion was not interested in talking to us. He would pass our doorway to go to his room. Our food was to come from his kitchen, but we could not tell him

that I am not allowed to eat potatoes. Nobody came to ask if we needed anything. We did not feel wanted.

So, we quietly slipped out of the house and went to our poor friends. They made arrangements for the women to sleep in one of the quarters and the men in another, and gave one of their quarters to us. We told them, 'We don't want luxury; we want the people with whom we can talk, people who want us. The people in that house are like tree stumps!'

The fact is, what is important is the person.

Devhuti gave up everything. Ultimately she became a jeevan mukta.

The Fifth Canto.

Now, I will tell you a little about the fourth Canto, but first I will tell you four points about Dharma.

Atri and Anasuya.

There was a Maharshi Atri. He is one of Brahmaji's sons. His wife is Anasuya – she was the daughter of Devhuti and Kardam Rishi.

The word *atri* means – *atraiva iti atri* – he who is *sarvatra* (everywhere), is atri. This is one meaning.

Na trih – he who is free of the three gunas (the tendencies of Sattva guna, Rajo guna and Tamo guna), is called Atri.

The origin of atri given in the Nirukta (etymological interpretation) is –*atraiva iti atri* – he who is here, is atri. *Bharjanaatmabhrigu* – is how the origin of Bhrigu, Angira, and Atri, is given simultaneously. It is described that Bhrigu, Angira and Atri are also Tattvas – the real nature of the human soul.

Anasuya was the wife of Atri, who was *trigunateeta* (beyond the influence of the three gunas). The word is *anusooyaa*, and another word is *anasooyaa*. One who is free of *asooyaa* (jealousy) is anasuya. Anasuya is one who does not find fault in the good qualities of other people – *asooyaa-gune'shu doshaavishkaranam anasooyaa*.

Both husband and wife did Bhagwan's bhajan. They meditated on the *niraakaara* (formless) Ishwara. Their life was such that they never saw faults in anyone. They did dhyana continuously of the formless Prabhu who is the Atma of all. They were not disturbed by visitors. A wonderful fruit of this is described in the Bhagwat.

The fruit of their *saadhanaa* (effort for Bhagwan) was that Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh, all three, came to give them darshan. Atri and Anasuya meditated continuously on one formless Ishwara, and Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh manifested before them.

Atriji asked, 'Maharaj, I did dhyana of one Ishwara; why have you three come before me?' This is written clearly in the Bhagwat, and the answer is very interesting.

'Look,' they said, 'all three of us want to be your son. The first point is that we three are one. The *adviteeya* (non-dual) is not a subject of darshan. Therefore, without becoming three – without accepting the *upaadhi* (attribute) of Sattva, Raja and Tama – we cannot give you darshan. That is why we have become three and come to you. Now you, father, have done the dhyana of the formless Ishwara. You have become the trigunateeta, and we have become your sons.' Meaning, Sattva-Raja-Tama, and the *adhishtaana* (substratum that is pure consciousness) that is present in them, is the child of Atri and Anasuya.

Whose sons are Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh?

One person gets immersed in the dhyana of one Ishwara. To what extent can we praise him? The extent of his greatness is praised to the extent that even Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh became his son! He becomes the father of all! He did dhyana of the Father of all, and became everybody's father. The greatness of the form of Dharma that is Bhagwan's dhyana is revealed here.

Dharma and Murti.

We will take another point in this principle; that of Dharma and *moorti* (idol; image). You need both Dharma and murti in your life. You think that you can do Dharma without spending any money and without having to fold your hands! Dharma avoids such people, you know! It is not possible for *bhaava* (feeling) to be created without *dravya* (substances; materials) and *kriyaa* (actions).

Those who do not know the quintessence of our Shastras, read the Shastras, or think about them are not worth discussing. After all, you should know how bhava rises in the heart. When someone sees a woman or man, *kaama* (desire) rises in the mana. *Lobha* (greed) rises when you see wealth. *Krodha* (anger) rises when you see an enemy. *Dve'sha* (aversion) rises when you hear criticism, and *raaga* (affection) when you hear praise.

Stooyamaanaahi de`vataa veerye`na vardhate`.

The Nirukta says that a Devta's powers are enhanced when their *stuti* (eulogizing) is done. Do vichar for yourself. All the vrittis arise from your own mana. You see the vishays through your mana; meaning, the senses perceive the objects of the senses and awaken inclinations in the mana. And, our kriya awakens *glaani* (remorse) or *abhimaana* (pride) in our mana.

Kriya and dravya are necessary for Dharma. Please don't get trapped in arguments and counter arguments! There can be no puja without an *adhishtaana* (substratum). If any puja is done, it is done in some place. A *ve`dee* (alter) has to be made for the puja.

What do you think – isn't a masjid a murti? Isn't a church a murti? When one place, niche, or pillar is made, that becomes a substratum. There can be no puja without a substratum.

The use of objects is necessary in Dharma. Do *daana* (charity) of five rupees, two fistfuls of grain, a yard of cloth – then it becomes Dharma. In a puja the Pundits offer some *mauli* (red cotton thread) in place of cloth. What does this mean? The mauli represents cloth. This becomes a bhava. It is said, '*Sarvabhaave` tu akshataa*' – if you have nothing else, offer some *akshat* (grains of rice). Bhava will rise in your mana.

When we keep a murti for doing Bhagwan's puja, it becomes a *nimitta* (instrumental factor) for bhagvat-bhava to arise in our heart. Bhagvat-bhava cannot arise without a nimitta. Whether you listen to a discourse on Bhakti or Vedanta, bhava will rise in your heart through the nimitta of shravan.

Adrishtaadashrutaad bhaavaat.

(11. 26. 23)

The principle of the Bhagwat is that bhava for the *adrishta* (that which cannot be perceived by the senses) arises by shravan.

Na bhaavo upajaayate`.

It is not possible to acquire bhava for something you have never seen or heard. That is why the fragrance of tulsi is needed to create bhava. You need a murti that holds a *bansuree* (flute), or a Shaligram Shila (round stone worshipped as Bhagwan Vishnu), or a Shivalinga a stone worshipped as Shankar Bhagwan). And then, you should apply *chandana* (sandalwood paste) and akshat on it. Then, if you shut your eyes and meditate, your vritti will let go of the *brahmaakaara* (form of the Brahman) and hold on to the *antara aakaara* (the form in the heart). After all, by which method can you hold in your heart a form you have never seen?

The wife of Dharma is *moorti-vyakti* (an image that represents the Brahman). What is created from this?

It is Nara-Narayana!

Nara means the jeeva and Narayana means the *antaryaamee prabhu* (Bhagwan who abides in the heart). Actually, the mana and the *shareera* (body) are not separate either. I will tell you some day, that Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh are one. The meaning of this is that the shareer and mana, and the jeeva that identifies with them, are absolutely one. Those who think about the mana as being separate from the shareer do so in order to do *vive`ka* (discriminate between them). Those who think the jeevatma as being separate from the mana do so for the same reason. And, it is for the same reason that people think about the *prapancha* (the interactive world created from the five elements) as being separate from the Paramatma. Essentially, neither is the jeeva separate from the Paramatma, nor is the body.

Where do Nara-Narayana abide?

When a *dharmaanushtthaana* (ritual of instituted Dharma) is conducted to awaken the bhava of the Ishwara in a murti, the murti becomes Nara-Narayana. *Sattvame`kam dvidhaa sthitam* – one existence seen in two forms.

Up to now I have told you that Dharma is successful by the *aashraya* (shelter; refuge) of the Ishwara.

What happens with *bhe`da buddhi* (the conviction that separate objects exist)?

This is shown in the episode of Daksha. His Dharma was destroyed because he believed Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva to be separate. His Yagna was destroyed. When he got the *abhe`da buddhi* (the conviction that only the one Brahman exists) his Yagna became successful. Through *vyatire`ka* (distinction) it was shown that Dharma will be destroyed if you keep a bheda buddhi. Abheda buddhi is Dharma.

I will tell you about this tomorrow.

Murti was Daksha's daughter. She was married to Dharma, and their sons were Nara-Narayana. I told you this yesterday. If you have the *drishti* (vision) that all the *moorti* (forms) in this world with a *daksha* (skillful) drishti, and live as per the rules of Dharma, this world will be seen as a form of Narayana.

Nara (a human being) and Narayana (the Ishwara) are considered one in the Shastras – *sattvame`kam dvidhaa sthitam*. It is stated in the Mahabharata that the nara is Narayana, and Narayana is the nara. Actually, there is not much difference between the mana and the shareer. Narayana is seated in the mana and the nara is seated in the shareer. If *naratva* (being a nara) is based on the *aakriti* (form; shape), Narayana is based on the bhava. The form and the feeling are clearly related.

Krodha (anger) is a bhava and the reddened eyes, flushed face and rigid body are the akriti. The akriti indicated the bhava and the bhava indicates the akriti. That, which appears in the form of the shareer also appears in the form of the antahkarana.

Manasaa vachasaa drishtyaa grihyate`anyairapeendriyaih,

ahame`va na mattoanyaditi budhyadhvamanjasaa.

(11. 13. 24)

Hansa Bhagwan said, 'It is only I who is seen by the mana, eyes, speech, and other indriyas. Nothing except Me is seen.'

The question here is not of the *ateendriya* (beyond the scope of the senses) Paramatma; the question is about the Paramatma, and this is stated in the Shrimad Bhagwat itself.

'All that you see with your eyes is Me. All that you speak with your *vaanee* (faculty of speech) is Me. All that you think with your mana is Me. Nothing exists, but Me. Understand this quickly and understand by the simplest method, that apart from me, there is nothing.'

Daksha.

Daksha's daughter Murti was married to Dharma. She became the mother of Nara and Narayana. But, what was the condition of Daksha?

Two *roopa* (forms; aspects) of Daksha are described. One is the *bhagavat-virodhee* (opposed to Bhagwan) Daksha and the other is *bhagavat-aashrita* (protected by Bhagwan) Daksha. Daksha's life had two states. Whether you call it a mistake or an oversight, the lapse was a minor one. Actually, it was not Shankarji's mistake; it was Daksha's mistake. There are times when a small mistake turns into a drastic situation. This is why the Shastras say – *maa pramaadaa* – don't have pramad.

Svaadhyaayapravachanaabhyaam na pramada.

(Taittareeya Upanishad 11. 1)

Never do pramad about *svaadhyaaya* (studying the Shastras) or *pravachana* (spiritual discourses).

Pramaado mrityurityaaha bhagavaan brahmanah sutah.

Dhritarashtra asked the Sanat Kumars, 'What is *mrityu* (death)?'

The Sanat Kumars answered, '*Na vai mrityurvyaaghra ivaatti jantoon*. *Mrityu* is not something that devours you like a lion. *Pramaadam vai mrityuraham braveemi*. I call pramad *mrityu*.'

Actually, the dullness of mind that leads to forgetting what a person ought to do is death. You should be constantly vigilant in all you do.

These days, there are conferences like Vishwa Nirman (Builders of the World). People use the phrase, 'Builders of the Nation'. Similarly, 'Vishwa Srashta' (Creators of the World) is used in the Puranas. Vishwakarma creates a city or a palace.

There was a conference of Vishwa Srashtas – meaning, those who develop the world. Brahmaji and Shivaji were seated there. Many great *prajaapati* (rulers),

Rishis, Maharshis and others were seated there. Only one person was missing; Vishnu was not present at the conference. Everyone else was present.

Vishnu means *vyaapaka* (all-pervading). *Ve`ve`shti vishvam drishti* – the vision of comprehensiveness was limited. Even those who had it held it in their hearts and remained silent.

Daksha Prajapati entered. Everyone present stood up respectfully. This is an etiquette observed since ancient times. Manuji has said:

Oordhvam praanaah prakramanti yoonah sthavira aagate`,

pratyutthaanaabhivaadaabhyaam punastan pratipadyate`.

When an elderly person comes before a younger person – meaning, when someone, whose Gnan is more mature comes – the *praana* (life sustaining breath) of the younger person comes out.

Pratyutthaanaabhivaadaabhyaam punastan pratipadyate`.

When the junior person stands up and bows his head, the prana goes back into his body. Prana mean kriya-shakti – the power to act.

A person feels nervous before his seniors. His ability to act disappears. He feels confused about what he should, or should not do. If he stands up to show his respect, the blessings, protection, teaching and initiation of the elder come into his life.

Everybody stood up when Daksha entered the hall, but Brahmaji and Shivaji remained seated. Brahmaji is Daksha's father, but Daksha found it intolerable that Shivaji, his son-in-law, didn't stand up. Daksha felt publicly insulted.

People tend to take even *pranaama* (obeisance) as their right. 'Why didn't he bow down to me?' they ask. One should never think on those lines. The thought of wanting someone to do pranam should not come to your mind.

Daksha first said some harsh words to taunt Brahmaji. 'I would never have got my daughter Sati married to this *markatalochana* (a person whose eyes are like a monkey's) Shiva, but for the insistence of this old man (Brahmaji)!'

You should note this point. Even if it is Brahmaji himself, who is the go-between in the matchmaking, he can be sure of receiving taunts! A girl has to stay with her family all her life. Is it possible that she never makes a mistake? Any mistake made by her will be used as a complaint by the boy's family, to the matchmaker. If the boy makes some mistake, the girl's family will use it to complain! Matchmaking is very risky!

So, Brahmaji, too, had to hear some harsh words. A small matter resulted in shaaps and return shaaps being given. Daksha ostracized Shivaji from the *jaati* (caste; group) of Devtas. 'Henceforth, he is not permitted to eat with the Devtas.' The meaning of this is that Shivaji would no longer get a share of the offerings made in a Yagna.

Then Shivaji's *gana* (dependents; troop) gave a shaap to Daksha and his followers. The people who had affection for Daksha gave a shaap to Shivaji's followers. An everlasting tradition of raaga-dvesha was created between the followers of Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

Two brothers in a family I know went to Court over a dispute. The elder brother won the case. However, after winning the case he went, himself, to the younger brother. It was a beautiful scene. He said, 'Brother, what are your plans?'

'I will go in for an appeal,' replied the younger brother.

'What is it that you actually want?' asked the elder brother. 'You and I have at most five or ten years to live. It is possible that you get me penalized or that I get you penalized. Whoever may win, the result will be enmity between our future generations. I will give you what I have been awarded. For the sake of our children and grandchildren, I ask you not to go in for an appeal.'

This is the way a person can be alert to avoid increasing a quarrel.

I want to tell you this for those who don't know the reason behind the quarrel between the Shaivas and the Vaishnavas. Amongst the Vaishnavas, the commentary of Shri Ramanujacharyaji Maharaj on Vedanta Darshan is well-known. It is considered the first and oldest commentary among the Vaishnavas. Among the Shaivas, Shri Kanthacharyaji's commentary on Vedanta Darshan is well-known. Shri Appay Dikshit has written a treatise on this commentary, called the Shivarkamanideepika. I am telling you this deliberately. Both the Shaivas and the Vaishnavas used to abuse each other. They even fought physically, when Vaishnavas said that Shri Kanthacharyaji stole the commentary from Shri ramanujacharyaji, and the Saivas said that Shri Ramanujacharyaji stole the commentary from Shri Kanthacharyaji!

That means the question is: which is the older commentary? Which was written first? The older would be the original and the later one would be the stolen one.

I have not studied history, but I draw your attention to one point. Please think about the enormous similarity in the two commentaries. The substance of Shri Ramanujacharyaji's commentary is the same as that of Shri Kanthacharyaji's commentary. Had the principle not been the same in both, the issue of stealing would not have cropped up. There may be a dispute about the historical fact of who was the first author, but where is there any dispute about the principle established in both? Both the Shaiva-vishishtadvaita and the Vaishnava-vishishtadvaita accept the principle of vishishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism). People seldom notice this point!

Actually, the difference of opinion is not a difference at all. We accept even the Charvak Darshan to be a darshan (school of thought), and ascertain it. We also dispute it, but we give it a position along with other Darshans, and do vichar on it. The difference of opinion does not necessarily create raaga-dvesha, because all vichar is good.

Think that a man is doing seva of the whole world – this is his vichar. Another man is doing seva of only Hindustan. Well, doesn't Hindustan come within the whole world?

One man is helping his father to rinse his mouth, and another is washing his feet. Both are rendering service to their father. Serving Hindustan is serving the world, and serving the world is serving Hindustan. Where is the difference of vichar in this? The vichar of all is good, and they should be respected. I will tell you one thing more, and then talk about the Bhagwat.

One day, Rajarshi Purushotamdas Tandon was weeping as he talked with Makhanlal Chaturvedi. What was he talking about?

‘Lala Lajpat Rai told me once, to become the President of one of his institutions – perhaps it was a Bank,’ he said. ‘I told him, “you and I have a difference of opinion. Your vichar does not match with mine, so I will not work in your institution.”

Lala Lajpat Rai told me, “Why go on harping on vichar-vichar? Vichar is an insignificant thing. It is a *vikaara* (distortion) of the buddhi. So many thoughts keep coming and going. They are not important enough to bring bitterness to the mana. What are thoughts worth? My brother, all vichar is good. The difference of opinion is in the *aagraha* (insistence). Insistence leads to conflict. Desires lead to conflict. Selfishness leads to conflict. Do vichar clash physically? Ideas don’t create a conflict; pride creates conflict.”

Now I will proceed with the episode of Daksha. There was so much dvesha in Daksha’s heart that he wanted to humiliate Shivaji publicly. ‘I will organize a Yagna in which Shivaji will have no portion.’ It was with this intention that Daksha did a Yagna. As a result, his daughter, Sati, died. Then Veerabhadra and Shivaji’s other followers attacked the Yagna. The Yagna was disrupted. Daksha was killed.

No Dharma is successful without the ashray of Bhagwan. You can accept a practical significance of this, that Dharma done for the good of all is *siddha* (successful) because the Ishwara abides in all hearts. Dharma done to humiliate someone is never successful. A person who does Dharma with hypocrisy is destroyed. This was Daksha’s fate ultimately.

And then, where there is no *poornataa* (wholeness) there will be *bhanga* (breaking up). The limbs of Brahma, Indra, and other Devtas were broken. They

went to Shivaji. He began to laugh. 'There is no bheda in my heart,' he said. Everything was set right once more. There is no bheda in Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. There is no bheda in this entire creation!

One point is stated here. It is not that there is *abhe`da* (absence of separateness) only in Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; there is no bheda in any being in this world. When a person sees bheda, his *anushthaana* (religious ritual) becomes just like a *bhasmani hutam yaa kuhakaraaptamiva tamorvyaama* – seeds sown in barren land. If *homa* (oblutions offered in the sacred fire) is done in a heap of ash, it will not give any fruit. Similarly, if seva is done with deceit in the heart it is not successful.

In the same way – *asad bhavati bhagavad-buddhi* – no ritual of Dharma succeeds unless it is done with the feeling that Bhagwan is present in all hearts. If any Dharma anushthana is done with the intention of humiliating someone, or to show off worldly wealth, some or other obstacle is bound to crop up.

Ve`ve`shti vishvam – He, who pervades the whole world, who has wrapped up everything within Himself, is Vishnu. When Vishnu, the all-pervading Paramatma, was pleased, Daksha came back to life. His heart was purified. He saw Shivaji and remembered his daughter, Sati, who had died. He wept with remorse.

The meaning of this is that Dharma done under the refuge of the Ishwara, and for the purpose of pleasing the *sarvaatmaa* (Atma of all) is successful. That is called the Bhagwat-Dharma. And, Dharma done for one's pride, without taking refuge in the Ishwara, is not the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Two different Dharmas are shown here. Please understand this clearly. One is the Dharma done for the sarvatma Ishwara's puja, and the other is Dharma done for the puja of the Aham (I; the ego). Dharma done for the puja of the Aham is never successful. Only Dharma done for the Ishwara's puja is successful.

Both the *anvaya* (connection) and the *vyatire`ka* (separation) are shown. If you leave Bhagwan and do Dharma; if your viewpoint is not all-pervading, and there is no feeling of seeing the Atma of all as one in what you do, you will get mrityu.

If you work with the thought of pleasing the sarvatma Paramatma, you will get total success. Daksha's story is concluded by showing the viewpoint that is contrary to the Bhagwat-Dharma, and the viewpoint that is favorable to the Bhagwat-Dharma.

There is one word in our Shastras – *nagna* – naked. In villages they say *nangaa*; meaning, he is shameless. He doesn't care what people think of him. A person who is not clothed in the garments of the *shaashvata samvidhaana* (eternal laws of righteous living) is naked.

One should proceed in life wearing the mantle of the restraints of intrinsic Dharma.

Dhruv – a bhagavat of the highest category.

The story of Dhruv comes after this. You are all familiar with the story of Dhruv. The stories of both Dhruv and Prahlad are given in brief in the Shrimad Bhagwat, but they are given in the Vishnu Purana in great length.

Suneeti (the ethical) and Suruchi (the pleasant) were the two wives of Raja Uttanapada. You all know the difference between the two. One lady keeps her house clean and beautifully decorated. Not even a bit of dust can be found anywhere. Her kitchen is spotlessly clean; she dresses beautifully, keeps her children well-dressed, and ensures that everything is pleasant in every way. A man is pleased to have such a wife.

And, Suneeti is one whose behavior is such that there is no quarreling between the elder and younger sisters-in-law, and the mother-in-law is not displeased in any way. The children are well brought up and her husband's comfort is attended to diligently. She is also careful that her self-restraint continues to be a part of her life. Her behavior should never be contrary to Dharma.

Suneeti is one whose progress is virtuous, leading to good fortune. She keeps the future consequences in mind before doing anything. This is *su* (good) *neeti* (good moral conduct). I have seen women who kept aside some money or jewelry when the husband's business was doing well. When he faced financial difficulties, she

gave them to him, enabling him to overcome the setback. I have seen ladies who gave such good advice to the husband that helped him get out of the wrong path he had strayed on. This is the meaning of Suneeti.

Suneeti's son is Dhruv (permanent). Dhruv means *achala* – one who does not shift from his place, one who always remains. And Suruchi's fruit is immediate – *uttama* (excellent). One feels great pleasure at that moment. There is a difference between neeti and ruchi. *Ruchi* (the appealing) looks at the immediate fruit, whereas neeti's fruit comes in the future, as a result. So, Suneeti's son was Dhruv and Suruchi's son was Uttam.

Maharaj Uttanapada was sitting in his palace one day, with Uttam on his lap and Suruchi beside him. Everything around was beautiful. Dhruv came into the room and tried to clamber on to his father's lap. The Raja did not say anything. He was afraid of Suruchi's displeasure. It is also possible that Dhruv was not well dressed, or that his hair was not combed properly. Keep in mind, however, that *sautiyaa dadha* (a burning jealousy for the husband's other wife) is eternal.

Brahmaji's son was Manu, and Manu's son was Uttanapada. That means, Uttanapada was Brahmaji's grandson. When he kept two wives with him, a strong resentment between them was natural. The Raja had partiality in his mana. Therefore the friction between the two wives was an eternal phenomenon. If a man has two wives, it will always be a cause of dukha for him, so a person should save himself from such a situation. This is a practical lesson, very useful in life.

I am taking up only the episodes that are related directly to the life of humans. I have not yet taken up the principle in this episode.

When Dhruv began to climb onto his father's lap, the Raja did not say anything, but Suruchi told Dhruv, 'Get down! Don't you know that you are born of another woman's womb? You have no right to sit on the Raja's lap. Go. Do the Ishwara's *aaraadhanaa* (loving worship).'

This was a very good recommendation. Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has made an astute comment on this. He says, 'Surychi says that after doing the Ishwara's aradhana – "*madgarbhe` saadhayaatmaanam* – bring yourself into my womb.

How can the son born of another woman sit in the Raja's lap?" Suruchi did not say that when Dhruv does Bhagwan's aradhana and gets Bhagwan's darshan, he should ask for the boon that he is allowed to sit in his father's lap. She said that he should do aradhana until he dies, and then be born as her son in his next birth! Only then would he get to sit in his father's lap.'

The statement made by Shri Vallabhacharyaji is that by saying this, Suruchi disdained the Ishwara. Her words indicate that even the Ishwara could not fulfill Dhruv's wish to sit on his father's lap; he would have to be born as her son to get that privilege. It emphasizes the importance of her womb. When a man says, 'Your supporters are hardly likely to give you what you want – even the Ishwara can't do that!' the man disdains the Ishwara's power.

Suruchi had spoken sarcastically, but the *sattva* (purity) in Dhruv accepted it as the truth. Suneeti did not oppose it. She could have said, 'She is my *sauta* (husband's other wife). She has taken the Raja away from me, and now she wants to send my son to the forest.' Is it not possible that this thought would have come to Suneeti's mind? This is where Suneeti's quality of *su-neeti* (good moral conduct) is revealed.

Suneeti could easily have told Dhruv, 'My son, don't listen to her.' She could have wept and quarreled with the Raja, 'Am I not your wife?' What else could an ordinary woman do? However, Suneeti said, 'The words come from my *sauta*, but they are absolutely true. Therefore, my son – *tame`va bhrityvatsalam* – take the ashray of Prabhu, who loves His bhaktas like a father.'

Naradji met Dhruv just as this five year old child left the palace gates. Unexpected help comes. You must pardon me if you don't like what I say, but people who have all kinds of worldly support – wealth, houses, cars, people, etc – are not able to experience this easily. It is not impossible, but it is not easy. When a person lifts up both hands in complete surrender to Bhagwan, and walks towards the forest, he is *niraashraya* (without any support). It is then that he finds out how help comes unexpectedly. I can tell you about scores of my personal experiences, when I was given food when I had no food, money when I had no money, I found a true friend when I had no one to help me; that, too, in a village where I was a

stranger. When I lay down to sleep, troubled by hunger, I was given food by a stranger. It is marvelous how the Ishwara keeps an eye on everyone!

When I was young, I had read a Hindi translation of the Bible. It said that just as a shepherd looks after his flock, particularly the sheep that tend to stray, the Ishwara looks after the jeevas, particularly when they begin to stray from the right path.

I am not suggesting that you actually make yourself *nirashraya*; I want to give you *vishvaasa* (faith and confidence). You can, if you wish, derive benefit from my personal experiences. These days, people are disinclined to accept the benefit of the experience of their elders. They want to put their hand in fire to experience for themselves that it burns! They refuse to accept what their parents tell them.

I want you to have the *vishwas* that the Ishwara protects us. However, a person notices this only when he is alone, with no other support. Only then does he understand that it is the Ishwara who helps and protects.

I tell you, the Ishwara is as real as this world, as real as the hall we are in, as real as your listening and my speaking. We can get the Ishwara's *darshan*. We can meet Him. We can laugh and joke with Him. We can merge with Him. We can experience Him. The *bheda* is absolutely false.

Here, it must be understood that Dhruv left the Raja, left the Kingdom, left his mother. He had no companion. He left the Palace with no thought as to what he would eat for breakfast or lunch. As soon as he stepped on to the road, Naradji came and stood before him.

In the Shastras, Naradji is said to be the Ishwara's *sankalpa* (resolve). Please don't ever think yourself to be alone and helpless. This *dharatee* (earth) is your mother, in whose lap you live. The Ishwara is your father, before whom you stand. He becomes air and gives you breath. He become sight and gives you *roopa* (forms that you see). And, the *mana* of Bhagwan became a Guru and stood before Dhruv in the form of Narad.

‘Oh, you are still a child!’ said Naradji. ‘Where are you going? Look; it is the nature of a *kshatriya* (warrior class) to be unable to bear an insult, but go home again. I will go with you and talk to the Raja. He will give you great respect. He will take you on to his lap. Your mother will give you a lot of love. I will rebuke Suruchi and warn her that she will be harmed if she ever again says anything hurtful to you. I will frighten her and scold her. I will give her a shaap. Come with me. We will go back to the Palace.’

Dhruv said, ‘Maharaj, this is the path on which I got your darshan as soon as I stepped on it. Why are you turning me back from this path? If you met me at the first step on this path, Bhagwan will meet me at the second step! I am absolutely certain now that this is the right path for me. I will not turn back.’

Please don’t think that Naradji was like the people who give *deeksha* (initiation) to children in order to increase their own following. Deeksha is meaningless as long as the mana lacks the right understanding, or desire for Bhagwan. Naradji saw Dhruv’s mature resolve and gave him the *dvaadashaakshara mantra* (a mantra of twelve syllables worshipping Vishnu Bhagwan).

I will also talk about *chamatkaara* (miracles; supernatural phenomenon). It is not about the whole life. It is written in the original Bhagwat that if *japa* (ritual chanting) of this mantra is done for just seven days and seven nights, the *drishti* (vision) becomes so *pavitra* (pure; unsullied) that the person is able to see things that are invisible to the normal eye.

Pumaan pashyati khe`charaan.

You read about the dvashakshara mantra in books. That is like a lottery – you may get it or you may not. It is a gamble. When this mantra is given by a Mahatma it comes in the form of a bequeathment. It is handed down from Guru to disciple in an unbroken tradition.

Dhruv got this mantra from Naradji. He went into the forest and did aradhana. The aradhana was extraordinary, but I do not intend to describe it. Dhruv got success by the *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) of Bhagwan, by his *saadhana*

(method), and he got Gnan. This five year old child said what today's great gnanis recite:

*Yoantah pravishya mama vaachamimaam prasuptaam
sanjeevayatyakhilashaktidharah svadhaamnaa,
anyaanshcha hasta-charana-shravana-tvagaadeen praanaannamo bhagavate`
purushaaya tubhyam.*

(4. 9. 6)

'Prabhu! You are seated in my hriday. I recognize You. Who inspires my tongue to speak? Which is the shakti that awakens my dormant power of speech? *Dhiyo yo nah prachodayaata* – what is this shakti?

Hasta-charana-shravana-tvagaadeen – my hands-feet-ears-and skin are activated by Your shakti.'

There is a special shakti in our shareer. Even if you say that the shakti is separate, isn't the shakti in all shareers a common shakti?

Very well; what is the source from which the *saamaanya* (common) shakti and the *vishe'sha* (special) shakti are obtained? It is the Parameshwara's *siddhi* (accomplishment). One should see Bhagwan in the hriday.

I will tell you one more point on this occasion.

The longing for a darshan of the Ishwara is not born in humans. When youngsters go to a college and listen to a talk on the theme that there is no Ishwara, they clap enthusiastically. They listen to talks by scientists who reject the idea of a higher power. How knowledgeable are you? How much science do you know? Are you more intelligent than Einstein? Do you believe in your heart that you are a greater scientist than he was? Einstein folded his hands and said that there is a power that is beyond the reach of his calculations.

And you listen to one talk and come and announce that there is no Ishwara! The intellect that gets convinced by a lecture from someone, without investigating the

matter further, is pitiable. I tell you with all certainty that an object that can come into our heart and intellect can also be experienced by the senses.

Apyasad praapyate` dhyanaat nityaaptam brahma kim punah.

(Panchadashi)

It is the principle of Vedanta that an object can be obtained by doing dhyana even if it does not exist in this world. This shloka is given in the Panchadashi, in the portion called Dhyana Deep.

We have this capacity, given by the Ishwara, by *poornataa* (wholeness), that we can make the Ishwara *saakshaata pratyaksha* (experienced personally through our senses). If you say, 'the *pratyaksha* (perceived by the senses) of the Ishwara is not possible' I will ask, 'Who are you?'

Do some vichar on this. The *naastika* (atheists; non-believers) people are more *shraddhaalu* (having faith) than the *aastika* (theists; believers). Listen to me till I finish making my point.

Is a nastik a nastik after seeing the *abhaava* (non-existence; lack) of the Ishwara? Is there – or has there ever been – an atheist who states that he has seen the abhava of the Ishwara? Whether your intellect grasps this or not is another matter.

Who is it that sees the abhava of the *ghata* (pot)? When someone says, 'the pot is not here,' he says it because he knows about the existence of a pot. The knowledge of abhava is dependent on the knowledge of the equal. This is a rule of the Darshan Shastras. It means, only a person who knows what a pot is can know that it is not there. Nobody has the authority to say that the Ishwara is not there, unless he has seen the Ishwara!

The poor atheist completely believes in the buddhi of other people. He hears an opinion of others and accepts it as the truth. I am not saying this with any wish to speak ill of them, but when they laugh at the believers, saying that they have blind faith, they are no better than the people they laugh at!

One point about the believers – we have shraddha for the Ishwara without having seen Him. Do vichar on this. We believe in the Ishwara and do His dhyana. What will be the direction of our life as a result of this?

When we believe in the Ishwara and meditate on Him, He comes into our hriday in the form of the *dhya`ya* (object of meditation). The hriday gets filed with Him, then it overflows, and the Ishwara takes on the form of the whole world! The whole world is perceived as form of the Ishwara. Raaga-dvesha are completely removed.

Both belief and disbelief are based on shraddha. Disbelief results in a loss for us; belief gives great benefits. If you proceed with belief in the Ishwara you will get the Ishwara's darshan in the *saakaara roopa* (with form and attributes). You will experience Him as the *antaryaamee* (one who abides in the heart). You will get the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of Him as the form of your Atma, because once you give acceptance for the Ishwara, it is natural to want to know about Him. What I am telling you is the *niyama* (rule), you know!

Once a person accepts that the Ishwara exists, the question, 'What is the Ishwara?' is bound to arise in his mind. And when a person foolishly accepts the opinion of atheists, the possibility of *jignaasaa* (wish to know) is destroyed. The Paramatma is separate from both belief and disbelief. *Aastikataa* (theism) has a *saadhana* (method for spiritual progress), and *naastikataa* (atheism) has *uchhrinkhalataa* (lack of restraint). The Paramatma, who is separate from both, is the *siddha svaroop* (eternally established essence).

I tell you this with full authority, that people who do dhyana of the Ishwara, do His bhajan, have prema and bhakti for Him, obtain the darshan of the sakara Bhagwan. Then they experience the *niraakaara* (formless) roop. The nirakara roop is *anubhavya* (experienced directly, but not through the senses). *Aakriti* (form; shape) is in both; nirakara is also an akriti, because it is different from the sakara. And sakara is also an akriti because it is different from the nirakara.

Seen from the *tattva-drishhti* (viewpoint of the Tattva) it is actually sakara, and the knowledge of both the sakara and the nirakara is the *saakshaata* (incarnate)

Brahman that is not affected by the *de'sha-kaala-vastu* (space-time-matter) in which the sakara and nirakara both frolic. The sakara also frolics on the same substratum – the Brahman – and so does the nirakara. That is why the *rasika* (romantic people) of Vrindavan say that the Brahman is the *dhaama* (divine realm) and Shri Krishna is the one who does *vilaasa* (sensual pleasure) in it.

So, Dhruv got Bhagwan's darshan. Then he got the Kingdom and became the Raja. Uttam and Suruchi were killed by a Yaksha (a demigod who attends to Kubera, the god of wealth). There was a war with Kubera. Bhagwan Manu himself came to Dhruv. The Bhagwat gives an excellent description of the evils of war. Dhruv, too, was at fault. Those who read the Bhagwat will know that it is written clearly that Dhruv was at fault.

Manuji said, 'My child, some Yaksha killed your brother. Kubera did not kill him. Nor was he killed at Kubera's order. One Yaksha committed a crime, but you have killed many for the offence of one. It was the mistake of one Yaksha, but many Yakshas have been killed for his one mistake. Do you not see the *dosha* (fault; wrong) in war? A person whose *chitta* (mental inclination) harbors *krodha* (anger; rage) and *dve'sha* (hatred) houses his enemy in his heart.'

Dhruv immediately understood the teaching of his grandfather.

Another point to be observed here is that Dhruv's journey began with a sarcastic comment and Naradji's teaching. Dhruv did *saadhanaa* (effort for obtaining Bhagwan) with great dedication, and he attained Bhagwan.

Even after obtaining Bhagwan he got a worldly Kingdom and Artha (wealth). He got the Empire and the inherent doshas in ruling a Kingdom came into him. He became involved in killing many to avenge the crime of one.

Then Manu came, meaning, the root of *manavataa* (essential human qualities) represented by Manu. The basic nature of a human is not to fight. Strife is not an intrinsic feature of a human being. A human being is not hostile by nature. This is what Manu explained to Dhruv. Dhruv realized the truth of what he said.

This is a wonderful story. When Dhruv's mana became empty of the vritti of anger, Kubera himself came to Dhruv. Kubera is much greater than Dhruv. He is a *lokapaala* (a deity who presides over a part of the universe), a *dikpaala* (a deity who presides over the four directions). He told Dhruv, 'I am pleased with you because you accepted the teaching of your grandfather.'

Yastva pitaamahaade`shaadvairam dustyajamatyajah.

(4. 12. 2)

You gave up the anger that is conquered with great effort. You are the recipient of the *kripa* (Grace; compassion) of the great Mahatma Narad, and of Bhagwan, and also of your grandfather. Now I will bestow *kripa* on you. Become the *kripaapatra* (recipient) of a Devta. What do you desire? Ask for whatever you want.'

Dhruv said, 'The bhakti which I had attained left me because of the years of anger that filled my heart. I want only that this bhakti never leaves me. This is the *varadaana* (boon) I ask for – *achalam bhaktim* – let my bhakti be *achala* (constant).'

After this, Dhruv ruled for many years. Ultimately he put his foot on mrityu's head and went to a position that nobody else can attain.

One day, Naradji thought, 'My disciple has attained such a lofty position; let me go and see how he lives.' When he reached Dhruvaloka he saw that tears were falling from Dhruv's eyes. He was weeping.

'My son, what do you want?' asked Narad Muni. 'From the worldly viewpoint, the arrows of your mother's sarcastic comments, a Mahatma's *kripa*, and Bhagwan's darshan are all *artha-praapti* (obtaining worldly success). You obtained sadhan by a Mahatma's *kripa* and Gnan by Bhagwan's *kripa*, and you've achieved a very lofty position. Your antahkarana has become empty of anger, etc; it has become shuddha. Why are you weeping?'

Dhruv replied, 'It pains me that I did upasana for Bhagwan with a *sakaama bhaava* (desire for worldly benefits). Great people leave their Kingdoms and do tapasya for thousands of years, to obtain the *pada* (position; abode) of the

Paramatma. I did tapasya for worldly gain! This mistake in my life fills me with remorse. That is why I am dukhi.'

Naradji explained the matter to him.

The purport is that Artha is not forbidden in the life of a bhagavat. Dhruv had many children. One son became a Yogi. His name was Utkal. He was an *avadhoota* (ascetic). He was a jeevan-mukta right from the beginning. He had no interest in the Kingdom. The Kingdom was given to the other sons.

By Bhagwan's kripa, how did Dhruv accomplish his goal? The way Atri got Narayana as his sons, and the way Dakdha's Yagna failed because he was turned away from Bhagwan, but succeeded when he turned towards Bhagwan. Both Dharma and Artha are obtained by Ishwara-drishti.

The next episode shows that *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) and Moksha are also obtained by the Ishwara-drishti.

The primary factor in the Bhagwat-Dharma is not only letting go of the external, but also catching hold of the Ishwara seated in the heart. The most important thing is to develop an inclination for Bhagwan.

Nobody should get the impression that the Bhagwat-Dharma means sitting in a Mandir or living in a cave or forest! This may be required in the Sanyas-Dharma or Paramhansa-Dharma (Dharma for an enlightened Mahatma), but it is not necessary in the Bhagwat-Dharma. The people of Maharashtra are particularly familiar with this principle, because of the Varkari Sampradaya that is enriched with Saints like Gnanesh, Namdev, Eknath, Tukaram, Samartha Ramdas, and others. Their method is a combination of Bhakti and Gnan.

In Dhruv's life we see that he first got Bhagwan's darshan and then he got the Kingdom. There is no conflict between Bhagwan's bhakti and ruling a Kingdom. Then Dhruv got married, which shows that there is no conflict between Bhakti and having a family life.

After that there was a war. Thus, Bhagwat-Dharma has scope for fighting if necessary. If, by the Ishwara's wish, it becomes necessary to go to war, remember that Bhagwan is the *nirvaahaka* (executor), *sanchaalaka* (director), and *pre`raka* (initiator) of both *hinsaa* (violence) and *ahimsaa* (non-violence).

There was no *glaanee* (depression) in Dhruv's mana. He knew, 'This is the *leelaa* (frolic) of Prabhu, who is seated in my hriday.' The conclusion of this leela was that the very person he was fighting came and blessed him, and gave him the boon that he would always have consistent bhakti for Bhagwan.

I told you about this so that you would understand that the Bhagwat-Dharma is not detached from wealth, marriage, or war. It is not that Bhagwat-Dharma applies only to the *nivritti-paraayana* (those who are inclined to withdraw from worldly activities). Shukadevji is *nivritti-paraayana*, and he is a *bhagavat-dharmee* (one who follows the Bhagwat-Dharma). Dhruv is *pravritti-paraayana* (one who is inclined to worldly activities) and he is also a Bhagwat-dharmi.

Bhagwan's *paarshada* (messengers) came to Dhruv with a *vimaana* (air plane), because a *shareera-dhaaree* (one who has a body) has to face mrityu. Now, how can Dhruv (the permanent) have mrityu? Dhruv and mrityu are mutually contradictory terms. He who is dhruv will not die, and he who dies will not be dhruv.

When the *paarshada* (messengers) came, Dhruv was in no haste to go to Bhagwan's dhaam. He had a bath, did the ritual of the Sandhya Vandan, did the japa of the Gayatri mantra, did *tarpana* (offering oblations to the ancestors) and did the japa of the dvadashakshara mantra. Then he visited the neighboring ashrams and took leave of the Mahatmas.

I draw your attention to one point. After taking leave of the Mahatmas, Dhruv asked the parshads, 'You have brought a viman to take me to Vaikuntha, but where is my mother?'

Had it been a Sanyasi, he would not have asked for his mother when getting on to the viman. Had it been a Yogi, he would have said, 'I must empty my mind of all thoughts'. Hearing such talk, people get the feeling that a mind free of all thoughts is a very good thing. This conviction is created by listening and reading about different opinions.

One day, somebody asked Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj, 'If this *sansara* (world) is *mithyaa* (false), why is it seen?'

'Oh, you foolish child,' said Baba. 'From where did you hear that the sansara is mithya?' That means, the man had heard the words but had not grasped the purport. People listen to talk and become convinced that it is paapa to even see, or remember things.

Dhruv asked about his mother. Look; in the Bhagwat-Dharma you can have *bhagvat-buddhi* (the feeling that this is Bhagwan) for your mother, and think about her, and do her puja. Vishnu Bhagwan keeps Laxmiji with Him, Shiva Bhagwan keeps Parvatiji with Him, and Krishna Bhagwan keeps Radhaji with Him. This means, when the *maatri-shakti* (the power in the form of the mother) is with our *aaraadhya de`va* (the Bhagwan we worship) – when Sitaji is with Shri Rama,

and Brahmaniji is with Brahmaji – then where is the objection for a wife, or, for a family and relatives?

The parshads said, ‘Maharaj, please don’t worry about your mother. Bhagwan thought about her before you did. He felt that a mother who has a son like Dhruv should get Vaikuntha even before Dhruv gets Dhruv-loka! See, her viman is ahead of yours.’

That means, the mother also gets kalyan if the son is a bhakta. This is a special feature of the Bhagwat-Dharma. The Shrimad Bhagwat is not only for Brahmins and Sanyasis. It is for the kalyan of everyone who is born in Bhagwan’s *srishti* (creation). It explains the Bhagwat-Dharma. Just as the father’s wealth is for all his sons, Bhagwan’s wealth is Dharma, and He has given it for all His children.

All right; let us have a quick review.

Four principal ladies are given in the first canto. The Bhagwat-Dharma gives kalyan to women, people of the lowly castes, animals, birds, and all beings. Shukadevji said, ‘Since I (a parrot) can do sadhan in spite of being a bird, human beings will get the vishwas that they can get kalyan.’ Kagbhushundi said, ‘Not only a shuka; even if you become a crow and become a bhakta of Bhagwan, where is the doubt that you will get kalyan?’

The Dharma in which even an animal gets kalyan is undoubtedly of great benefit for humans. Sanjay was a *shoodra* (low caste), but he was a *parama* (of the highest level) bhagavat. Vyasaji made him his disciple and bestowed *divya drishti* (divine vision) on him. As a result, he could sit near Dhritarashtra and hear the teaching of the Bhagwat Gita that Shri Krishna gave to Arjuna far away on the battlefield, in the Mahabharata war. He also got the darshan of Bhagwan’s *viraata* (universal) form that Arjuna got. This is the greatness of the Bhagwat-Dharma. Viduraji was a shoodra, but Uddhavaji, Maitreyaji and others have great respect for him. He gives a sermon on Dharma to Dhritarashtra. Bhagwan went to his house, and ate there. This is the greatness of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Draupadi is predominant in the first canto. Ashwathama had great competence, but that is not why Draupadi showed great compassion for him; nor was it

because Ashwatthama's mother was a noble lady. When any reason is given for kripa, it reduces the value of the kripa. Kripa done because of some reason has no substance. The fact is when kripa is done on an *ayogya* (undeserving) person, only then is it called kripa. Where it is not possible to get *hita* (benefit) by deserving it, or being eligible for it, or by Dharma, if even at such a point the heart overflows with compassion, then it is called kripa.

Ashwatthama was not eligible for any of the reasons for mercy – not by Dharma, nor by *nyaaya* (justice), nor by *auchitya* (being appropriate), not even from his own viewpoint. Even so, Draupadi's heart overflowed with compassion for him. This is the special quality of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Bhagwan feels *prasanna* (pleased) with a person who has compassion. It was a particular aspect of Draupadi's character that she had kripa for even an *aparaadhee* (offender; criminal). She established a great ideal.

Bhagwan did kripa on Uttara. Uttara wanted her lineage to be protected; not only the Pandava's lineage but also the Kaurava's. Bhagwan showered kripa on her and entered her womb.

Kunti wanted Moksha. She said:

Sne`hapaashamimam chhindhi dridham paandushu vrishnishu. (1. 8. 41)

'I am attached to both, my father's and my husband's families. O Prabhu! Please do this kripa on me. The *sne`ha* (love) I have for the Pandavas and the Yadu vanshis – instead of for You – should disappear. Let my behavior remain affectionate, but please cut the noose of *moha* (deluded thinking) that is in my hriday.'

Kunti's prema for Shri Krishna was so great that she wanted Shri Krishna's darshan even in *vipatti* (adverse circumstances). I told you this during my discourse on the first canto.

However, I had not drawn your attention to one point:

Bhavato darshanam yatsyaad apunarbhavadarshanam.

(1. 8. 25)

‘Shri Krishna’s darshan gives Moksha.’

This is in Kunti’s heart. Kunti wants her kalyan. Uttara wants her kalyan as well as the kalyan of her vansha. Draupadi wants the kalyan of even a criminal. All three are Bhagwat-dharmi. All three desires are worthy of being brought into our life.

1. The kalyan of the worst criminal.
2. The kalyan of the family.
3. Our own kalyan.

There is a fourth lady in the first canto who is generally not noticed. She has divine qualities. She is *prithivee* (the Earth), the *adhishtaatree* (a supremely controlling principle). These days people say, ‘This is the opinion of India.’ ‘This is the tragedy of our country.’ ‘This is what India lacks.’

What is the meaning of the word India? It means the people who live in India, the Indian people. Similarly, they talk about the Prithivi. The Prithivi manifests in the form of a Devta.

What dukha did Prithivi have? It is not the kalyan of a criminal or the kalyan of the family or lineage, or even her own kalyan that is the cause of her dukha. She is dukhi when she is separated from Bhagwan and sukhi when she is with Him. Dharma asked Prithivi, ‘Devi, why are you dukhi?’

‘There are many reasons for my dukha,’ she replied. ‘There is dukha for Dharma, and because people are turned completely towards the external world. But these are not the main causes. The main cause is that Bhagwan has hidden Himself. I used to be adorned by His footprints on me while He did His leela on this earth. I am dukhi without His darshan; when I get His darshan I am sukhi.’

Where there is an association with Bhagwan Dharma is *chatushpaada* (having four legs; supports), and when Bhagwan is not seen, Dharma’s feet are broken.

You see, if the viewpoint of *poornata* (wholeness; totality) is missing won’t there be attachment to the individual ego? When there is *preeti* (love) for the

aprichhinna (not separate) *ahankaara* (the Atma of all), then Maya – meaning, pride, worldly attachments and frenzy – are the three doshas that come into a person's life. Tapasya becomes a sadhan for pride, not for obtaining Bhagwan. *Dayaa* (compassion) becomes a sadhan for aasakti, as is seen in the episode of Raja Bharat.

There is a well-known political leader – I will not name him – who jumped down on the railway track to save a lady who had falling from the platform just as the train was about to come in. Later on he got married to her. In time he lamented so bitterly that his health was ruined. He died in a short span of time. He went to show his compassion, and then he became infatuated with her. His status as a leader was lost. He died a bitter man. That means a person shows compassion can become incurably attached, unless he is very careful to remain emotionally detached.

If a person is against Dharma, but his prema for Bhagwan is constant he will not get pride. Nor will he get aasakti for anyone. In order to protect yourself from aasakti for another, and abhiman about yourself, and to continue maintaining the Bhagwat-Dharma, it is necessary to have Bhagwat-bhava in life.

The second canto has no special mention of any lady, but the third canto is extraordinary. Four types of ladies are described in it. You can give your mind to this.

One is a *nikrishta* (debased) lady – Diti. Please understand that there is no gender distinction in the Bhagwat-Dharma. That means, both men and women can have Bhagwat-Dharma in their life. The gender is irrelevant. There is no distinction of *jaati* (caste or group) either – it may be a human being or an animal. Nor is there any distinction of *svabhaava* (nature; temperament) – it can be an Asura or a Devta. Vritrasura, Prahlad, Bali, Vrishaparva, Baan and others were born in the Asura jati, but they were Bhagwat-bhaktas. The Bhagwat-Dharma has no distinctions of the person's nature.

Yannaamasakrichchhavanaat pulkasakoapi vimuchyate` samsaaraat.

(6. 16. 44)

If even a butcher follows the Bhagwat-Dharma he will become liberated from this world.

Even a low-caste eater of dog meat instantly gets the same fruit as a person who does a Yagna. Therefore, there is no *adhikaara-bhe`da* (distinction of eligibility or qualification) of *karma-bhe`da* (different activities), no distinction of the nature of the person, or the group or the gender, in the Bhagwat-Dharma. It gives kalyan to all.

The episode of Diti is amazing. The Bhagwat-Dharma is described through *vyatire`ka* (separateness) to explain what the fate of a person is, if there is no Bhagwat-Dharma in them.

Didi did not restrain her sensual urges. She caught the garments of Kashyapji and insisted that he satisfy her lust immediately. The first point is her lack of self control.

The second point is that it was the time of Shankar Bhagwan, in which a person should stay pure. The third point is that Kashyapji told Diti, 'Shankar Bhagwan moves around at this time. It is twilight.' She disdained her husband's warning.

Therefore, Diti's doshas were:

1. Disdaining her husband's wisdom.
2. Insisting on what she wanted even after being warned that this was the time when Shankarji moved around.
3. Not bothering about the time being one for maintaining purity.
4. Disregarding all factors to satisfy sensual urges.

These are the four doshas that came into Diti's life. It was because of them that the Asuras Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu were born to her.

Is this not something to be watchful about in our life? The things mentioned in the *maryaadaa-shastra-niyantrana* (restraint and decorum laid down by the Shastras), including practicing self-restrain on certain days, like the *e`kaadashi* (eleventh day of the lunar calendar), *grahana* (eclipse), and *poornimaa* (full moon), and timings like early morning and twilight.

It is written in the Upanishads that the longevity of a couple who indulge in a conjugal relationship during the day is reduced. Their prema becomes their enemy.

What was the result of Diti's flouting the rules of time? Nobody in the world wants they their sons should become like Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksha! But now, see the special quality of the Bhagwat-Dharma – it comes into Diti's heart in one moment! She felt great remorse after her wrongdoing. She felt afraid that Shankarji may be displeased, and she would have a miscarriage.

Didi asked Kashyapji for forgiveness. 'Patidev, please pardon my offence.' When Diti understood that she had erred, and asked for forgiveness, Kashyapji was pleased with her. 'Very well,' he said. 'Your sons will be wicked, but your grandson will be a bright jewel among bhaktas.'

Vinaya (humility), *pashchaataapa* (repentance), *aagnaapaalana* (obedience) and *samyama* (self-restraint) bring kalyan to a person.

Asuras were created because Diti flouted the rules of the Shastras on proper behavior, and refused to listen to Kashyapji's advice. The life of Shataroop and Manu is a wonderful example of a good marriage. There is no dispute between them. The happiest *grihastha* (householder) is where the husband and wife are in agreement. The husband's mana is merged with the wife's and hers with his, in a Dharmic life. This is a wonderful couple. They are Bhagwat-dharmi.

Actually, prema between a husband and wife is also Bhagwat-Dharma, because Bhagwan abides in the hearts of both. Their prema is for the Bhagwan seated in the heart of the other.

The third *daampatya* (married life) is that of Kardam and Devhuti. Here, the husband is a *virakta* (detached from worldly considerations), and the wife is a *pativrataa* (totally dedicated to her husband). She serves her husband in every way, but at the end he leaves her and goes away. She also goes on the same path, but she does not place any hindrance in his becoming a Sanyasi. She obtains Gnan from her son, and becomes a jeevan-mukta while staying at home. Among all the ladies extolled by the Shastras, Devhuti is described as a jeevan-mukta.

Devhuti's nine daughters are described in the fourth portion of the third canto. Kardam and Devhuti got daughters like Anasuya, who were highly spiritual. You see, the fruit of *paativrata* (being a devoted wife), *se`vaa* (service), and *samyama* (self-restraint) is Kapildev. The fruit of lack of self-restraint are Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu.

The *adharma-pradhaana* (predominated by that, which is contrary to Dharma) creation is of the Asura, and the *dharma-pradhaana* (dominated by Dharma) creation is the Ishwara.

If you want to make the Ishwara your son, give priority to Dharma in your life. The life of a person who gives up self-restraint and decorum will be ruined. The life of a person who lives with proper restraint will rise above *jadataa* (inert matter) and the person will succeed in merging himself with the *chaitanya* (the Atma that is pure consciousness).

Now, when we come to the fourth canto we see Suniti. This aspect, too, is worth noting. Atri and Anasuya are of one mind. Among the Rajarshi (sages who are also kings), Shataroopa and Manu's relationship is similar to that of Atri and Anasuya's among the Mahatmas. Anasuya has merged herself completely with Atri. His mana was her mana. She had not the slightest inclination to see any faults in him. The result was that they became the parents of Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara, all three! The Ishwara became their son – a baby they could pick up and feed and love. You can take it that something comes into the womb of your *vritti* (mental inclination).

Yatra yatra manoyaati tatra tatra samaadhayah,

de`haabhimaane`galite`vignaate`paramaatmani.

The *de`haabhimaana* (subtle pride of being a body) was dissolved. They got the experience of the Paramatma.

Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj used to say, 'Look; there is a banyan tree. A botanist will explain the properties of the wood – its flaws and good points. A *vaidya* (doctor of Ayur Veda) will speak about the medicinal properties. A bhakta will say

that this is *saakshaat bhagavaana vaasude`va* (Bhagwan Vasudev incarnate). The botanist uses the wood and the vaidya uses the medicinal portions of the banyan tree. And, what does a bhakta do? He uses the tree to nurture the bhakti in his heart.

Science lets the tree remain as it is, or uses it for multiple purposes. A bhakta lets the tree remain as it is, and visualizes the four-armed Vasudev in it, with *shankha-chakra-gadaa-padma* (conch shell-discus-mace-lotus) in His hands.

Does this make the tree Vasudev? My brother, that is immaterial! The bhakta's hriday takes on the form of Vasudev!

Now see the third point. Just as from the viewpoint of science, the banyan tree is wood, from the viewpoint of Tattvagnan it is the Atma. The name is banyan and the form is that of a tree. It is the Brahman that appears in the form of the banyan tree.

Thus, from the *jada-drishhti* (the viewpoint of the inert) the banyan tree is something that is useful for us, and from the *bhaava-drishhti* (the viewpoint of bhakti) it is useful for developing bhakti, and from the *tattva-drishhti* – from the *brahmaatmaikya bodha drishhti* (the viewpoint that the Brahman and the Atma are one) the banyan is the essence of the Atma. It is pure consciousness. The jeevan-mukta sees, 'It is I in the form of this tree.'

When bhakti comes into a person's life everything he sees seems to be a form of the Bhagwan. And, when Bhagwan is seen in the vritti, this *ghata-matha-pata* (pot-house-cloth) – everything is seen as a form of Bhagwan. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma – to see Bhagwan in all.

Braahmane`pulkase`ste`ne`brahmane`arke`sfulingake`,

akroore`kroorake`chaiva samadrik pundit matah.

(11. 29. 14)

When Bhagwan gave Uddhavaji the teaching of Dharma at the end, He said, 'There is a Brahmin, a butcher, a thief, the sun, a spark of fire, a cruel person and

a person who is not cruel. The person who sees Bhagwan in all, whose behavior is filled with Bhagwat-bhava is *samadrishti* (impartial).'

A complete omission of interaction is not desirable in the Buddhist or Jain philosophies. Nor is it desirable in Vedanta or Bhakti. It is a condition in Yogis, when they have no awareness of anything but the Self, during Samadhi. Or in bhaktas, when they are completely immersed in thoughts of Bhagwan. However, it is a temporary state.

Gnan that is an opponent of *vyavahaara* (interaction) is not Gnan at all. Gnan has to be that, which remains the same in interaction and the absence of interaction. There can never be an *abhaava* (absence) of Gnan, because the absence of Gnan is established by Gnan!

Suppose someone says, 'Gnan had not been created at that time.' How did he know that Gnan had not been created? He knew it through Gnan (knowledge)!

'Gnan will not remain.' How do you know? You know through Gnan. 'There is no *ghata-gnaana* (knowledge about the pot) at the moment.' How did you know this? Gnan-abhava cannot be known without Gnan. Therefore, it is not possible for Gnan and vyavhar to be in conflict.

Atri and Anasuya became like a single entity. After that – *dharmastha daksha duhitaryajanishta moortayaama* – the marriage of Murti and Dharma resulted in Nara-Narayana being born as their sons. This couple is also a single unit. The difference in the two couples is that the Bhagwat-Dharma is predominant in the union of murti and Dharma, whereas Gnan is predominant in the union of Anasuya and Atri.

The most unusual state is that of Sati and Shivaji. It is stated here that is the husband and father have a dispute the wife should not side with her father, because she has to live with her husband. She should support her husband and stay with him. If it so happens that her husband inadvertently does something that angers her father, the wife should side with her husband. This strengthens the prema between them. The wife belongs to her husband, not to her father.

And, where she does not side with her husband the marriage is not successful.

Suhriddeedrikshu parishankitaa bhavaan.

(4. 4. 1)

Satiji's mana was torn in two. One mana wanted to go and meet her parents and the other mana said that this would displease Shankarji. Sati took the wrong decision. The Bhagwat-Dharma was to accept Shankarji's advise, because she did not know the full background. It was Shankarji's gravity and magnanimity that he did not tell Sati about how her father had misbehaved with him. This is *pati-dharma* (the Dharma of a husband). It is the Dharma of a husband to avoid telling his wife anything that will make her unhappy, or spoil her relationship with her father's family. The husband should never talk about her not getting a proper dowry, or not getting proper respect from the family she was born in. What Shankarji did was right and proper, and in keeping with Dharma.

In the context of *pranaama* (bowing down), Shankarji said, 'You see, pranam is not done to a body composed of the five elements. When we bow down before a Shaligram Shila (a round stone worshipped as Vishnu Bhagwan), we bow down to the Bhagwan in it; not the form made of the five elements.

I bow down with *bhagavat-buddhi* (the feeling that this is Bhagwan). The interaction of pranam and *aashirvaada* (blessing) is done with Bhagwat-bhava. When I did not do *namaskaara* (respectful salutation) to Daksha, why did he think that I didn't do namaskara because his *antaryaami* (Bhagwan within) is also my antaryami? Daksha is ignorant about this.

We ascetics are not bound by the rules of social etiquette. The *maryaadaa* (framework of proper behavior) of a householder is different from ours. The Dharma of humans is different from the Dharma of Devtas.'

Shankarji explained the matter fully, but Sati favored her father over her husband. The result was that her husband went into a Samadhi. She received no welcome or respect from her father. Ignored, she used the power of Yoga to burn her body,

and accepted a new body. Bhagwat-Dharma was established in her after she became Parvati.

Similarly, Kunti's fetters of moha were broken by Bhagwan's kripa, and she obtained Bhagwan. This is described clearly in the Bhagwat. Uttara obtained Moksha along with the Mukti of Parikshit.

The description of Draupadi is very strange. When the five Pandavas set off on their journey to attain Swarga, none of them looked back to see whether Draupadi was with them or not – *patinaam anape`kshataam*. The Shrimad Bhagwat says that Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakul and Sahdev – the five husbands of Draupadi – walked towards Bhagwan with complete indifference for her. Draupadi thought, 'They are not even looking at me; they are looking at Bhagwan. So, why should I not look straight at Bhagwan? Why should I connect myself to them in any way?'

This episode comes in the first canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat. Draupadi got this thought and she focused her mind on Shri Krishna, and attained Him. That means, Draupadi is also a bhagavat.

Now, where the episode of the *sauta* (husband's other wife) comes, one factor is the prema between the husband and wife, one is the prema for the son, and one is the prema for *bhoga* (worldly pleasures).

Diti has prema for bhoga. Devhuti has prema for her son even after Kardam Rishi goes away. Anasuya has prema for her husband. Satiji has prema for her father, which leads to her death.

Because of her sauta-daha, Suruchi did not get *sadgati* (liberation from rebirth). The Bhagwat-Dharma is never established in any person who causes suffering to another, because it is very soft and tender. If you have dvesha for even a snake, the Bhagwat-Dharma cannot exist in your heart, because prema and dvesha can never stay together.

Dvesha is like a raging fire, whereas prema is like a shower of *rasa* (sweet emotion). If you put a grape on a piece of burning coal, the grape will be burnt.

Similarly, prema cannot survive along with dvesha. It is irrelevant who the dvesha is for – it may be for a snake, a rat, a thief, a dacoit, a Hindu, a Muslim, a wicked person or a sinner – if there is dvesha for anyone in our heart, it is not possible for prema to reside there. That is why the Bhagwat-Dharma is established only after removing dvesha.

Because of her deep love for her son, Suniti got Moksha by Dhruv's *punya* (spiritual merit). She got the realm of Bhagwan.

Vena – the father of *naastikataa* (atheism).

Now, there is another Bhagwat-Dharma that also has a meaning for our life. Take it that I will give you an interpretation of it once. Whether you think it applies to present times or not is another matter, because times keep changing.

A great *adharmee* (one whose behavior is contrary to Dharma) was born in Dhruv's lineage. His name was Vena. Manuji has mentioned him in the Manu Smriti. When Vena went around the country, people would cry, 'Vena is coming! Vena is coming!' This is described in the Upanishads and also in other Puranas.

The question is: how was it that a person like Vena was born in the lineage of a bhakta like Dhruv? The reason is that Mrityu's daughter, Suneetha, was married to Anga. Their marriage resulted in the birth of Vena. There was no dosha in the seed of the father or paternal grandfather, but the dosha of the mother's father came into Vena. This contains the viewpoint of the ancient tradition in India that is worth giving some thought to.

Three kinds of *shuddhi* (purity) are desirable in a person. The greatest commentator on Sanskrit grammar has written:

Treenyasyaavadaataani yonirvidyaa cha karma cha,

E'tachchhive` vijaanaahi braahmanaagryasya lakshanam.

Three factors must be pure.

1. The *raja-veerya* (pollen-sperm) should be shuddha. This is the *aadhibhautika* (of gross matter) shuddhi, also called the *yonishuddhi*. That

means both parents must come from lineages that have good qualities. The baby that is born is influenced by the qualities of both parents and the parents of both parents.

A considerable amount of thought has been given to *vaasanaa* (inherent strong desires). From where does a new-born infant get the knowledge of how to suckle his mother? You may or may not know, but I have grown up in a simple village. Puppies were born in December/January. I would go and look at them. The eyes of new-born puppies are not open; they cannot see. They feel their way to the teats of the mother, who lies down beside them, and drink her milk. From where do they get the knowledge of where and how to get milk? Why are they born as dogs? Why did their *pancha bhoota* (the five elements) turn into the canine species? What makes them put in the effort to seek nourishment? How do they know who their mother is, and what makes them stay away from other dogs and run to their mother? From where do they get this Gnan?

Effort is made because of the *vasanas* caused by past experiences, and the form is created because of the *karma-vaasanaa* (strong urge to do something). *Avidyaa-vaasanaa* (the strong desires called by nescience) results in 'I' and 'mine' being created. It is quite amazing!

Earlier, when a marriage was being arranged, people would look into the qualities of the family into which they would get their son or daughter married. The shuddhi of the rajo-veerya was the first consideration.

2. Rituals like the Sandhya Vandan, japa of the Gayatri mantra, worship of Surya Bhagwan (the Sun) and other Devtas is important. Surya Devta gives direct light (vision). If a person has no reverence for the one who gives light, he will not have reverence for his Guru, who gives him Gnan. Gnan is also a light, and the one who gives light is worthy of respect. This is called vidya-upasana.
3. Adhyatma meaning, *shama*, *dama* (restraint of the mind and body), *uparati* (disinterest in the external world), *titikshaa* (the ability to endure without getting agitated) and other virtues should be present in our life. These are the *aadhyaatmika* (pertaining to the spiritual) shuddhi. The *aadhidaivika* (pertaining to the Devtas; divine causes) shuddhi is upasana

of the Devtas. And, the *aadhibhautika* (of the five elements; gross matter) shuddhi is the raja-veerya of the parents.

These are called the *trividha* (three) shuddhis. Purity of the spirit, of the divine influences, and of the gross matter in an individual is required.

When wheat is grown once, the field does not give a good quality of wheat immediately in the next crop, so peas are planted between two crops of wheat. When all the vidya-buddhi comes to a person, the son often goes to a different field. Youngsters do not like the career of their father. Pundit Shivkumar Shastri was a renowned scholar of Kashi, but his sons were almost uneducated! I have stayed at their house and seen them.

Vena came into Dhruv's vansha. Prithu was created from even a person like Vena! I will tell you about this tomorrow.

Bhagwan sometimes plays extraordinary games! A person wants something, but something entirely different happens. There is a great *kripa* of Bhagwan even in this.

A Mahatma had once explained this to me, many, many, many years ago. He said, 'Suppose all your wishes began to come true. Whatever you wanted to happen happened. Could you know about the Ishwara's *sattaa-mathattaa* (existence – greatness)? Nobody would believe in the Ishwara if that were to happen. When there is someone who gives us what is contrary to what we want, we find out that there is some power that controls things. This is why a mother has the right to stop her child from indulging in his/her *vasanas*. A husband and wife also have this mutual right over each other. If a person does exactly as he pleases he will become so arrogant that he will not believe in the Ishwara!'

On the one hand, this is what will happen, and on the other hand, there is not just one person in this world; there are many people. Their wishes will clash, leading to increased *dukha* and strife. So, there is a controller of people's wishes, and that is the Ishwara. I will tell you about an episode in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Raja Anga was born in Dhruv's *vansha*. He had no children. He decided to do a Yagna to get a child. In earlier times there was a method of getting children through a *raasaayanika* (chemical) method. If you give the Yagna a *bhautika* (of the five elements) viewpoint, it means *prayoga* (usage). The Devtas did not come to Anga's Yagna. The priests were asked why this happened. After doing *dhyana*, they explained 'The Devtas are not coming because Raja Anga has no son.'

See the *bhaava* (feeling) in this. The Devtas wanted that there should be someone in Anga's lineage who would continue to do Yagnas in future. They wanted their *seva-puja* to be an ongoing thing. Why should they bother to come for just one Yagna if there was no scope for continued benefit in future?

Raja Anga did the *putre'shthi yaaga* – a ritual for getting a son. By the Ishwara's *kripa* it was successful, and he got a son. Raja Anga thought he would become *sukhi* if he got a son. The Devtas thought they would get continued *seva-puja*

from Anga's lineage. Here, Bhagwan played with the wishes of both! He played with Raja Anga's desire and the Devta's desire. The son Vena, from whom the Devtas hoped to get a lot of homa and *aahuti* (oblations offered into the sacred fire in a Yagna), made a public declaration:

Na yashtavyam na daatavyam na hotavyam dvijaa. (4. 14. 6)

'O Brahmins! You are not to do Yagnas, homa, or *daana* (charity). The Devtas depend on this.'

Vena snatched away all the Devtas' hopes of getting seva-puja from him! Now, see the condition of the father. Anga had thought, 'my son will look after me.'

Devtas are foolish in believing that humans give them their food (through offerings made in a Yagna). The fact is, it is the *sarvaantarayaamee* (one who abides in all hearts) Ishwara, who prompts people into action. Just think of how great a support this is for us to become *nisankalpa* (free of mental resolves; of wanting anything). Don't you see the connection with *yogaabhyasa* (Yoga means attaching our Self to Bhagwan. Yogabhyasa means the habit of being aware that the Atma is the only Satya)? Let go of sankalpas, let go of desires. Be at peace.

What was the state of Raja Anga? When Vena showed himself to be a complete nastika he tried to explain to Vena, 'My son, you are born in the vansha of Dhruv. You are my son. This is not the way you should behave.'

Vena paid no attention to what Anga said. It is the father's moha that he wants his son to behave as he wants. Just as every *beeja* (seed) develops independently, and has a different form and different *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impressions), every *kshana* (moment) has a different *ikaayee* (unit; one constituent of the whole) that can be expanded. The four directions – north, south, east and west – are present in every inch of space. If you wish, I can show you.

This is a handkerchief. North, south, east and west exist in it, in its every fiber. There is east on one side and west on the opposite side. There are north and south on two sides, and there are above and below.

Similarly every kshana contains the past, present and future. In the same way, good and bad sanskaras are inherent in every beej. Just as a moment exists in time an iota exists in an object. A beej has the predominance of inert matter and a jeeva has the predominance of consciousness. Everything is wrapped up in its own sanskara.

When the mother and father want their children to behave as per their wishes, and the children want the parents to behave as per their wishes, and the daughter-in-law wants the mother-in-law to adapt herself to her preference, they adopt the position of the Ishwara! Then, they suffer!

Te`re` bhaave` jo karo bhalo buro sansaara,

naaraayana too baitha kara apano bhavana buhaara.

Let the sansara do what it wants, good or bad. Narayana! We should sit and keep our heart clean!

At first Raja Anga was deeply distressed that his son did not listen to him. Then, one night, after some profound contemplation he attained mental peace. After all, he had been born in the lineage of Dhruv! He had the sanskara of his vansha! Bhagwat-bhava arose in his heart. 'Bhagwan has showered a great kripa on me,' he thought, 'by giving me a son like Vena.'

Kadapatyam varam manye` sadapatyaachchhuchaam padaat.

(4. 13. 46)

This is given in the original verses of the Bhagwat. 'A bad child is a very good thing.' This is the conclusion Raja Anga came to. *Sadapatyaat shuchaam padaat.* 'If the son is good, the father gets moha for him. Bhagwan has given me a son like Vena to make me *virakta* (detached from the world). A son like this comes in every generation, to make the father a virakta; to break the moha id the parents. What a great kripa of Bhagwan this is!'

One day when we were alone, I asked Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj, 'Baba, the people you stay with are like Shankarji's *gana* (dependents; ghosts and ghouls)!'

‘Yes, my child,’ he said. ‘I understand the nature of people.’

‘Then why do you stay with such people?’ I asked.

‘My *asangataa* (detachment) is strengthened by the company of such people,’ he explained.

This is something you may perhaps not have noticed: when we stay with people who are very good we get attached to them.

Raja Anga got *vairaagya* (detachment). He left the palace in the dead of night without handing over the Kingdom to his son, or discussing the matter with his wife. The Kingdom was without a King. All the Mahatmas gathered to decide what should be done, because chaos sets in where there is no ruler. It is essential for law and order to be maintained. There are some people who live righteous lives, some who are motivated by greed, and some who are controlled by fear. Bhagwan has given two vrittis to humans, *lobha* (greed) and *bhaya* (fear). There is nothing wrong in these vrittis.

The father of our present Governor Shri Prakashji was Shri Bhagwandasji. He used to say, ‘If there is any man who is free of the vrittis of greed and fear, and he does not believe in the Ishwara, I am prepared to accept that he is the Ishwara. However, if greed and fear are present in the mana, the biggest greed is the wish to obtain the Ishwara, and the biggest fear is that the Ishwara will punish me if I do something wrong. These two vrittis will not allow me to fall sideways – neither to my left nor to my right; and not backwards either. We keep our greed and fear within the framework of what is right and proper.’

How?

It is greed and fear that keep us on the right path. If somebody’s antahkarana is so shuddha that no vasana arises in it, the person is established in the Atma. He gets the *pratyaksha* (experienced by the senses) fruit of upasana.

Prakrityasammata ve`namabhyashinchan patim bhuvah.

(4. 14. 2)

The *prajaa* (people) did not want Vena to be the Raja, but the advisors were unanimous in their opinion. 'When a person is placed in a position of responsibility he becomes responsible. Sometimes, people are transformed completely. Give Vena this respect. Make him the Raja.'

And Vena did, actually, rid the land of thieves and dacoits. The power of a ruler manifested in him. The realm became free of crime. He was harsh in punishing wrongdoers.

On the other hand, Vena rejected the existence of the Devtas. The Devtas' hopes of receiving seva-puja from him were dashed. 'There are no Devtas,' declared Vena. 'Don't do Yagnas, don't do homa,' and – *bhe`reeghoshe`na* (4. 14. 6) – he had public announcements made in the whole kingdom, 'there is no other Ishwara but me. I am the Ishwara. There is no other Dharma-karma (ritual of Dharma). No Ishwara, no Dharma, no Vedas, no Brahmins.'

I am telling you a psychological truth. The country that does not have *aasthaa* (faith; belief) for the Ishwara cannot have *astha* for the Raja either. And, the country in which the people do not believe in the *shaashvata samvidhaana* (permanent Constitution) of the Ishwara will not believe in the laws of the Nation's Constitution either.

Samvidhan (the Constitution) is of two types – one is the constitution for all times, and the other is the Constitution for some period of time. The shashvat Samvidhan is for controlling the desires, greed and anger that come into the mana. And the *ashaashvata* (impermanent) Samvidhan is for controlling the stealing, cheating, and immoral acts done by the body.

There is a *chikitsaa* (treatment) of the mana that is shashvat, and a *chikitsa* of the body in which *aadarabhaava* (feeling of respect), *tirobhaava* (disappearance of the divine power), and *aavishkaraa* (invention) are involved. When the treatment of the mana is blocked, there will be a lack of belief in the Ishwara and respect for the Raja. When there is no faith in the Vedas there will be no faith in the Samvidhan. And, when there is no belief in *maryada*, life will become uncontrolled.

The *brahmavid* (enlightened Mahatmas who know the essence of the Brahman) remain untroubled and unburdened by the world. They reflect on the *saattvika svaroop*a (pure essence) of the world. If people don't have faith in them, the right intellect will not remain on this earth. Gnan will come to an end; it will disappear.

This is why it is necessary to give importance to these five: the Ishwara, the Vedas, the Brahmins (people who have grasped the purport of the Vedas and ensure they are kept alive), and our own *pavitrata*a (purity as per the Shastras). This is how the maryada of Dharma is continued.

A man can scrub his hands with *mitti* (clay) not thrice, but three hundred times. He may wear only silk and practice the *aparasa* (purity of lifestyle demanded for idol worship), and sit in a Mandir doing puja for three hours. If, after all that adherence to ritualistic worship, he comes out and does business unethically, tells lies, and harasses people, all his ritualistic purity is wasted. There is a clear description of this in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

Yamaanabheekshnam se`ve`ta niyamaan matparah kvachit.

(11. 10. 5)

Yamaanyatatyakurvaano niyamaan ke`valaan bhajan.

If a person just observes the *niyama* (rules for external purity), but does not observe the *yama* (rules for internal purity) – like Satya (truthfulness), *ahimsaa* (non-violence in thought, word and deed), *aste`ya* (not taking anything that belongs to another), *brahmacharya* (chastity) and *aparigraha* (not hoarding things we don't need), then – *patita* – he goes to his downfall.

Satya, ahimsa, asteya, brahmacharya and aparigraha are *nitya* (permanent rules). Ishwara *praanidhaana* (bowing down to the Ishwara; surrendering to Him) and pavitrata are *anitya* (not permanent). We can alter them according to the *de`sha-kaala* (place – time). We can do the *maalaa* (chanting with prayer beads) four times instead of five. We can bathe once instead of thrice. If we are in a place that is intensely cold, we can bathe without using water, using *bhasma* (ash) or

mantras. However, if Satya, ahimsa, asteya, brahmacharya and aparigraha are lost from our life, Dharma will never be established in it.

When the Mahatmas saw Vena disdaining Dharma, Bhrigu and the others who had great spiritual power came to him and explained to him about the right behavior a Raja should have.

The difference between the great and the small is clearly seen in this world. The personality of one is *te`jasvee* (bright; shining with nobility) and the other is *niste`ja* (dull; unimpressive). There is a comparable difference.

One flower looks tiny and another is large. One cow gives a lot of milk, another just a little. The light of a glow worm is feeble compared to the light of the sun. The one who shines the most is the Ishwara. Accept this fact.

‘Look,’ said the Mahatmas, ‘this is the *shareera* (body). It has tiny microbes, but the ‘I’ of the shareer is one. This ‘I’ is common to everything in the body, including the different kinds of microbes, some that cause disease and some that give good health. They are all a part of the ‘I’. In the same way, there is a multiplicity in this world, and one Ishwara in the multiplicity.

Had there been no one to give the fruit of karmas there would be no dukha in this world. Had humans been completely *svatantra* (not governed by any other) – the *svatantrataa* (independence) of the Atma-Brahman is a separate thing, different from the independence of humans – if a human being were to be individually independent, then nobody in this world should feel dukha and nobody should die, because how can a svatantra person accept his own death? And, how can a person accept dukha?

When anybody accepts that he is dukhi, and subject to death he will have to accept the Ishwara, because he has to die without wanting to die. He has to suffer dukha without wanting it. How can you deny the one who is so independent in giving dukha? Just as the eye needs light to see the objects in the world, an inner light is needed to see the proper and improper things within. The Vasudev within, who gives us this light, is the Parameshwara.’

Vena did not respect the wisdom of the Mahatmas. You probably know this – the Mahatmas did not use any weapon on Vena. A very good word is used here – *lokadhikkaarasamdagdham* – the people did *dhikkaara* (cursed) him. ‘This Raja made us abandon our Dharma. He ruined our Vedas, He reduced our *aasthaa* (faith) for the Ishwara, and he destroyed our *sanskriti* (traditional culture).’

The people had this kind of disgust for Vena. Vena was burnt by their curses. This has been mentioned earlier – *prajaa asammata ve`nam* – the people were unwilling for Vena to be their Raja.

Vena collapsed in a heap as the Mahatmas uttered ‘*hoon*’ in anger. Then they became tranquil again. ‘When there was a Raja, he gave a lot of dukha to the people. Let there be a situation where the people govern themselves.’

When the Mahatmas left, the people were left without a ruler. The Shrimad Bhagwat describes that people went about doing what each one pleased. Not liking their own house or village, they went to live in other places, but were not satisfied there either. They did not settle in peace. The strong exploited the weak. Governance was needed to control lawlessness and anarchy.

Yesterday, somebody was telling me that it is the opinion of some groups that people will become good citizens if everybody is given a good education. You can give teaching when a child grows up, but how can you give teaching to small children? You will have to cajole them to listen to you. If you write the letter ‘a’ on the blackboard and tell them that this is the letter ‘a’, and the child refuses to believe you, do you have any method of convincing him?

You may say, ‘My father called it ‘a’. It has always been called ‘a’. We write a figure for a particular letter. Every letter has a different shape. Which letter has which shape? There is an upasana for each *akshara* (letter of the Devnagari script). There is a dhyana for each akshar. Dhyana is done on ‘a’, ‘aa’, ‘ee’. In making a yantra (a mystical symbol) lines are made and dhyana is done of the lines. What about the akshar written in the yantras? Yantras are not implied; else, how would the arguments be resolved if they were written in different scripts?

There is no argument. The shape of the akshar is not implied. The lines of the yantra are not implied. It is their upasana that is to be done. There are many factors in the quintessence of upasana.

If there is no shraddha it is not possible to know which symbol is 'a' and which is 'aa'. Very well; how can you educate all the people? Won't there be some who cannot be taught? There are people who have no sense of responsibility. They tell others not to listen to anyone. They create anarchy.

What proof do you have that this is your mother? Your only proof is your shraddha in what your mother tells you. It is the same regarding your father. Nobody can establish either of these through *pratyaksha pramaana* (proved by direct personal experience). These are things that have to be believed.

There is something called shraddha in our life. A man has to believe that his wife is chaste, and she has to believe that he is faithful to her. We have to believe that this is my mother and this is my father and this is my son. Shraddha is an intrinsic part of our life. We cannot progress even one step, or learn a single letter without shraddha. It is not that everyone will become scientists or philosophers, be highly educated and very intelligent. That is irresponsible imagination.

Prudence is required in handling people. Science is needed, discussions and logic are needed, but along with these, there is a need for the wealth of shraddha. Tell me, do you believe that everybody will become *sadaachaaree* (leading an ethical lifestyle) if they become rich? Our Comrade bothers say that people will lead ethical lives when everybody has a good income. I have seen people become *uchhrinkhala* (go beyond the framework of decorum and decency) when they acquired great wealth. Do you believe that people will become honest when they are educated? That is absolutely incorrect. This world cannot function unless there is shraddha in the heart.

The Mahatmas came back. They saw that the land had become lawless. 'When Vena was alive he had destroyed the framework of Dharma. When we removed him, and depended on the people to govern themselves, it resulted in anarchy. What should be done now?'

The Mahatmas decided it was necessary to reinstate a Raja. What should the Raja be like? The Raja should be governed by the advice of the wise and learned, and do his duty as a Raja.

Vena's mother, Suneetha was a very clever woman. She did not let Vena's body be destroyed; she kept it preserved. The Mahatmas did *manthana* (delved into; churned) Vena's body. It is the rule of Creation that all things have good as well as bad qualities. Worldly interaction would not be possible without *anuloma* (regular) and *pratiloma* (contrary) behavior.

One person desires the darshan of Shri Krishna. If he goes into a Samadhi he will weep when the Samadhi breaks. The desirability is neither in Samadhi nor in Shri Krishna. Another person wants to attain a state of Samadhi. If some Devta comes repeatedly into his mind, he will consider the Devta to be an obstacle in Samadhi, and want to remove the Devta from his mind. When we want a Samadhi, a Devta becomes an obstacle and when we want a Devta, a Samadhi becomes an obstacle, because there is a complete absence of vritti in a Samadhi. Everything is in everything. This is the secret of *srishti* (creation). It is our principle. Ma Anandmayi spoke a lot about this. She would tell me, 'Pitaji (she called me Pitaji), the answer is in the question.'

Now, Bhagwan says:

Sarvabhootasthamaatmaanam sarvabhootaani chaatmani.

(Gita 6. 29)

(A Yogi sees the Atma in all and all in the Atma.)

What else does He say? He reiterates the same thing, that the Atma is in all and all things are in the Atma.

I challenge you to show me a principle that has greater magnanimity than that of the Gita and the Upanishads, where the One is in all beings and all beings are in the One! Everything is in everything. There is *amrita* (elixir; nectar) even in poison and *visha* (poison) even in amrita. There is *che'tana* (consciousness) even in the

jada (inert) and *jada* even in the *chetan*. What a wonderful principle! Can you show me any principle that is more magnanimous, lofty and superior?

The Mahatmas delved into Vena's body and separated the *dosha* (faults). Then they delved into the *baahu-shakti* (the power of the arms).

I will tell you something. Had they wanted to extract a Brahmin with Brahmagnan they would have done manthan of the head. Since they wanted to extract a Raja from the body, they did manthan of the arms. Bhagwan's *paalineeshakti* (the power to protect) is called *bahu-shakti*. It is through the arms that Bhagwan gives Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, all four Purusharthas. He protects everyone in the forms of Vasudev, Pradyumna, Sankarshan, and Aniruddha.

Just as the manthan of the ocean brought out both poison and amrita, both these Tattvas can be brought out by the manthan of the shareer. Prithu emerged from the manthan of Vena's shareer. He was told that he is the *saakshaat* (incarnate) Bhagwan.

There is no place where Bhagwan is not present. This is what we say. We never say, 'Bhagwan is not in that place; He is here.' There is no place where Bhagwan is not. This is wonderful!

Everyone showed great respect as soon as Prithu manifested. An extraordinary point is given at the very beginning of Prithu's life. After Prithu manifested, the Mahatmas did his *abhisheka* (crowning ceremony). There was a discussion about whether Mahatmas should get involved in secular matters or not.

When Bhrigu and other *tattvavit* (knowers of the Tattva) saw great harm coming to the people, they felt that they should certainly intervene. They wanted to bring forth the latent *hita-tattva* (beneficial element) in Vena. That is the true meaning of manthan. Everything can be brought out by manthan, but Bhagwan is present in all.

A gentleman had a self-imposed rule to eat his lunch only after he had fed some Sadhu. One day he found no Sadhu. He sent out his servant to find one and bring

him to the house. By the time the servant returned with a Sadhu, it was after three.

‘Please be seated, Maharaj,’ he said. ‘What is your age?’

‘I must be seventy two or seventy three,’ replied the Sadhu.

‘You would surely have done some *adhyayana* (study of the Shastras)?’

‘Yes, I have; a little Nyaya, a little Vedanta and a little Mimansa,’ said the Sadhu. He had a bright personality.

The man served him food. The Sadhu did not ask for water. He did not do the ritual of offering the food to Bhagwan. The Seth was shocked to see this.

‘Maharaj, won’t you do arpan to Bhagwan? Won’t you offer the food to Him before eating?’ he asked.

‘I do not believe in the Ishwara,’ said the Sadhu.

‘Oh, you don’t believe in the Ishwara! Are you a nastika? It is my misfortune that you have come to my house! I have no wish to feed a nastika!’

‘That’s all right,’ said the Sadhu. ‘I did not come to your house and ask for food. I came because you called me. I have no wish to eat.’ He got up and went away.

The Seth was a true bhakta. When he went to sleep that night, he heard a voice.

‘Sethji, how old was that Sadhu?’

‘Prabu, he was seventy two or seventy three.’

‘Did he get food all his life or not?’

‘Prabhu, he was glowing with health. He was very handsome. His face showed no sign of old age. He seemed extremely well fed!’

‘Who fed him for seventy two or seventy three years?’

‘You did, Prabhu! Who else is there to give food to any being?’

‘When I, Bhagwan, have fed him for over seventy years and kept him healthy, with such a bright personality, couldn’t you – My bhakta – give him food even one day? Is this your shraddha? Is this your bhakti?’

This point came to my mind when I was very young. I will tell you how it transpired. I will tell you its reference to the Bhagwat. I’m telling you about what I read a very long time ago.

Nanda Baba was sitting as usual. Shri Krishna would come and sit on his lap and pull his beard affectionately. One day, Shri Krishna came and bowed down to Nanda Baba. He sat opposite him with folded hands.

‘What has happened, my son?’ asked Nanda Baba. ‘Why are you sitting like this today?’

‘I want to ask you something. What are all these preparations being made for, Baba? Are they for some Yagna-Yaag?’

‘We want to do Indra’s puja,’ explained Baba. Just as the Devtas got ahuti regularly from Raja Anga, Indra and the Devtas wanted annual offerings from Nanda Baba. Shri Krishna objected sharply to this. ‘Karma gives its own fruit.’

You can read this in the original shlokas of the Bhagwat:

Asti che`deeshvara kashchit falaroopyanyakarmanaam,

kartaaram bhajate`soapi na hyakartuh prabhurhi sah.

(10. 24. 14)

Shri Krishna did Sandhya Vandan every day. He also did dhyana every day. He saw Himself as the Brahman. One day He said, ‘If there is somebody who gives the jeevas the fruits of their actions – if there is an Ishwara – *anye`shaam jeevanaam karmanaam falaroopee-faladaataa-falaniroopakah yadi kashchit eeshavarah asti, kartaaram bhajate`soapi* – he becomes the servant of the *kartaa* (doer of the karma). He will have to give the fruit of the karma to the karta. He is bound to do this.’ This is the sharp retort Shri Krishna gave.

When I read this, the thought came to me, 'Shri Krishna is saying this; He is Bhagwan incarnate!' Remember, I was still a child. Then I thought, 'Bhagwan has the liberty to say anything! He is talking about the Ishwara from the viewpoint of people's benefit. From His own viewpoint, however, He Himself is the Ishwara.'

The Mahatmas decided that investigation of the *hita-vastu* (that which is beneficial for all) must always be done.

Prithu: Adi Raja.

Now comes the story of Prithu. The Bandigana, appointed to eulogize the Raja, stood with folded hands to do Prithu's *stuti* (sing praises). The attitude of the *satpurusha* (people established in the Satya Tattva) is revealed here. Raja Prithu stopped them. 'Let no one speak words of praise of me.'

The buddhi of people who keep the company of flatterers is lead astray. A flatterer always agrees with what you say, and praises all you do, because he wants to keep you pleased and favorable to his interest. This ruins a person's ability to think objectively or understand his own faults and weaknesses. Later, in the tenth canto, the episode of the false Vasudev will come. People folded their hands and eulogized him saying, 'You are Bhagwan incarnate!' and he was deluded into believing it!

The nature of bhaktas is to hate being praised. It is not that they are inwardly pleased but pretend to not like praise; they stop people because they mean what they say.

Lajjanate`duritodyamaadiva nijastotraanubandhaapi,

apre`kshya klamamaatmano vidadhati preetyaa pare`shaam priyam.

Bhaktas do everything lovingly for the benefit of others, without thinking about their own strain, harassment, or fatigue. If they are praised they feel as though they are indulging in some great sin!

Vidyaavittakulaadibhistu bahusho yaanti kramaannamrataam,

ramyaa kaapi sataamiyam vijayate`naisargikee prakriyaa.

The greater the learning, lineage and wealth, the more humble they become. This is the nature of the Sarpurushas.

People who feel happy to listen to flattery are completely different! Pay attention to this – it is of great use in social interaction. A person who gets into the habit of listening to flattery will forget himself. He will be swept off his feet with false praise. Such people become enslaved by those who have caught their pulse and exploit their weakness for praise.

The Suta, Magadh, and Bandigana went to the Mahatmas. ‘Maharaj,’ they said, ‘the Raja has forbidden us to do our job of praising him. How are we to earn our living?’

‘Don’t praise the Raja,’ advised the Mahatmas. ‘He has just been created. He has not yet done anything. All your praises will be untrue. Speak about the good qualities he will develop and the great things he will do in future.’ When the Bandigana did this, it was as though Prithu’s future was being forecast.

Never give teaching to your child in the wrong way. Don’t say, ‘You are a fool!’ Tell him, ‘you will become a very learned person. You will become highly intelligent and do great things. You will serve the Nation.’ He will be encouraged. If you make disparaging remarks he will be discouraged. He will not be inspired to achieve great things. He will develop a feeling of inferiority. You will become an obstacle on the path of your child’s progress. Children should be encouraged towards lofty goals.

Prithu felt that he was being encouraged on the right path.

Swayambhu Manu is considered an *aadi-raajaa* (a primary King), and so is Prithu. The Bhagwat describes that there was no arrangement of villages or townships in those days. People settled wherever they wanted, in forests, on mountainsides, or communities where drinking water and food were available. As a result, these places became overcrowded. There was no organized system of anything.

The first problem Prithu faced was how to provide food for all. What were the people to eat? ‘I will tear apart the *prithivee* (earth)!’ he said. ‘I will not let the

hidden wealth remain hidden. I won't allow the Prithivi to deprive the people of what they need.'

Where are the mines of diamonds, gems, gold, silver, copper, etc? They are in the earth.

Then Prithivi appeared before Raja Prithu.

If you know about Yoga, I can tell you that the Devta of any *jada vastu* (inert object) can be experienced by the senses. If a person on the moon were to try to see our shareer, they would not be able to see anything, because the earth would seem so tiny from there. How could they see the body of an individual? Let us assume that they are able to see our bodies flitting round like flies, through a photograph. A photo cannot tell whether the object is inert or conscious. In the same way, we do not know where consciousness is concealed in the objects we experience through our senses.

There is consciousness even in the earth, water, fire and air. This is a very important principle. People believe in the absence of consciousness in them, accepting them as inert matter. Their experience is contradictory because they accept experience but not consciousness; that is a contradiction! It is not possible to accept experience without accepting consciousness.

If you say that you do not accept even experience, then on what basis do you say that there is no experience? *Jadataa* (the quality of inertness) cannot be established without *che'tanataa* (the quality of consciousness). *Naasti* (not is) cannot be established without *asti* (is; existence). This is the method of *anubhava* (experience).

Ultimately, Prithivi told Prithu to make the land level. 'Grain does not grow because the ground is high in some places and low in other places,' she explained. 'Create lakes to store water, and farm the land using the method used by the elders in the past.'

I will tell you about an incident of my childhood. Close to our house in the village was a pond. When malaria spread in the village, some medicine was put into the

pond to kill mosquitoes. The mosquitoes died, certainly, but after some time, a green film of moss appeared on the surface of the pond. The animals died when they drank water from that pond. It is foolish to believe that the toxic content has no effect on us.

Raja Prithu decided that all the *beeja* (seeds) – both *jada* (inert) and *che`tana* (having consciousness) – should be provided with proper nourishment. Even scorpions and snakes are entitled to life and food. Raja Prithu arranged that no species should be allowed to become extinct.

Field mice do a lot of damage to crops. They chew up the stems and carry large amounts of grain into the mouse holes. The *musahara* (people who collect and sell herbal medicines) did up the earth up to ten or even twenty feet, and take out the grains stored by the mice. On one occasion, people were desperate to find a way to curtail the damage caused by the mice. Some elders advised them to call a snake charmer and pay them to release four or six mature snakes among the crop. 'The snakes will go into the holes and eat the mice. They will live in those holes. The mice will be destroyed and the crop will not be damaged.' This means, even snakes are useful. Snakes and scorpions suck the poison from the poisonous objects. The poison is separated, and absorbed by them. This is a separate science.

Raja Prithu arranged for the food of the Rakshasas and Daityas (demoniac groups), Devtas and humans. He ensured that trees should not be destroyed and all kinds of vegetation should be sustained. Everything that had life got its own kind of food. Both food and nourishment are needed. He arranged for the *prajaa* (people; the populace) to have Dharma, he had the land leveled and lakes created. He established villages, townships and cities. He compelled everyone to remain within their *maryaadaa* (framework of what is right and proper). Just as the sun draws water for eight months and showers it back on the earth for four months, a Raja takes taxes from the people and uses the money for the benefit of the people. Prithu was a monarch par excellence!

Prithu held a Yagna. See the irony in this – a Yagna is done to please Indra, and the same Indra placed obstacles in Prithu's Yagna! Actually, *kriyaa* (action) and

nishkriyataa (absence of action) are the same. Indra is the Devta of Karma (action; a Yagna). What happened is that Indra began to spread *paakhanda* (villainy). Vishnu Bhagwan caught Indra and brought him to Prithu.

Kshamaapayata aatmaanamamushya kshantumarhasi.

(4. 20. 2)

‘Look,’ He said, ‘Indra has come to ask for your forgiveness.’ Prithu’s valor was such that Indra surrendered to him and asked for pardon.

Prithu had great bhakti for Bhagwan. Pleased by his bhakti, Vishnu Bhagwan gave him an *upade`sha* (sermon; advice). The fact is one should always have bhakti. Bhakti for the shareer is natural – is there anyone present who does not have loving devotion for his body? I salute such a person! We bathe the body – is this not puja? We put on good clothes, massage it with oil, and offer food to it. What is this, if not puja of the body?

You do puja of your shareer; isn’t that bhakti? If a person does puja of his shareer, but not the puja of the *graama de`vataa* (village Deity), *praanta de`vataa* (the State as the Devta), *de`sha de`vataa* (the Devta in the form of the Country), *vishva de`vataa* (the Devta in the form of the world), *hiranyagarbha* (the universal consciousness), the Ishwara Devta, and the oneness that is in the jeeva and the Ishwara – the Devta that is the Tattva, does that show his wisdom?

This is called Vishnu Bhakti. Vishnu Bhakti means to raise one’s vision above the shareer, and do bhakti of the one who pervades everything. Just as bathing, clothing, food and sleep are essential for you they are essential for all beings. Nobody can be sukhi without Vishnu-drishti (the viewpoint of the all-pervading Vishnu Bhagwan).

Bhagwan placed one hand on Garudaji’s shoulder, indicating preparation to leave. (Garudaji is the great eagle on whom Vishnu Bhagwan rides.) ‘Prithu, ask for a *vara* (boon),’ He said.

‘Prabhu, You met me; what more can I want?’ asked Prithu. Then he gave some thought to the matter, and said, ‘Please give me ten thousand ears.’

The indication is, 'I should not be bound by any individual talk about separate objects of the world. I should hear the *kathaa* (discourses) about the Ishwara. I should hear talk about the Ishwara lovingly, with ten thousand ears.'

I will tell you a part of the talk Prithu gave to his people tomorrow. After that, the Sanat Kumars came to Prithu. That means everything was organized systematically on earth, from the practical viewpoint. From the *daivik* (pertaining to the Devtas) viewpoint, ninety nine Yagnas were completed, and from the *aadhyaatmika* (spiritual) viewpoint Vishnu Bhagwan manifested.

After giving a sermon to his people, Prithu obtained Satsang (the association and discourse of Mahatmas). Prithu's episode is given in eleven chapters. The episode of Dharma is given in seven chapters. Dhruv's episode is given in five chapters. The five chapters symbolize Artha – the five worldly achievements through the five *indriya* (senses). And eleven indriyas – the five sense organs, five organs of action and the mana – are what the eleven chapters of Prithu's episode symbolize. They show that Prithu attained the fulfillment of all his desires. Prithu's story is one of attaining everything he wanted as well as *aishvarya* (magnificence; glory). I will tell you about it tomorrow.

Prithu's position among the rulers we have discussed is very high.

The Kingdom of Dharmaraj Yudhishtira was prosperous. The people were satisfied in every way. However, there was sadness at home, and a lack of interest in worldly objects.

The Kingdom of Swayambhuva Manu and Shataroopa adhered to Dharma in every way. Everybody in the realm was inclined to Dharma.

The Kingdom of Uttanapada had laxity that pushed Dhruv away. However, Dhruv became *bhakti-pradhaana* (dominated by Bhakti). This resulted in the people being inclined to think about Bhagwan.

There should be a *samanvaya* (connection) between the upasana of the *kaarya-brahma* (the Brahman that is the effect; the world) and the *kaarana-brahma* (the Brahman that is the cause of this world). This was there in Dhruv's life, but it did not remain in the lives of his descendants. His first son became a *virakta* (one who renounces the world). He left to obtain *brahmaanubhooti* (the direct personal experience of the Brahman). The rulers were not so focused on Bhagwan.

Raja Anga became the ruler. He wanted the Devtas to be pleased. The Devtas wanted that he should get a son so that they would continue to receive offerings from the lineage. What happened was just the opposite! The Ishwara played a joke; the very son from whom they hoped to get Yagna, homa, daan, vows of austerity and Dharma, turned out to be the greatest nastika!

Vena did not have *dve'sha* (hatred) for the Ishwara. The vritti of a person who has dvesha for the Ishwara become *eeshvaraakaara* (takes on the form of the Ishwara). When the dvesha is removed, the person merges into the Ishwara. I Vena, however, there was no dvesha for Bhagwan since he did not accept that Bhagwan exists! Where was the question of raaga-dvesha? The fact is there was an *ansha* (part) of the Ishwara even in the nastika Vena!

Vena was a harsh ruler, because he had no *ape'kshaa* (expectation; need) from anyone. He did not want votes from the people! The result of his harshness was

that there were hardly any thieves, dacoits, cheats or people who led promiscuous lives.

However, Vena gave no thought to the things people cherished, like Dharma, *sanskriti* (tradition and culture) etc. Two adjectives are given here for Raja Vena – *loka dhikkaara samdagdha* and *prakrita-asammata* (4. 14. 2). That means, Vena was burnt by the curse of the people, and that the people did not want him as their Raja. This is why the greatest Mahatmas in the Kingdom gathered to explain to Vena, how a Raja should rule. Vena disdained them. They uttered the word ‘*hoon*’ and Vena turned into ashes. Prithu was created from Vena’s body, as I told you yesterday.

Prithu was created out of what we believe to be a *nastika* shareer. The seed of *aishvarya* (magnificence; glory) and *shaasana* (the capacity to rule) were present in Vena. The *ansha* that was opposed to Dharma-sanskriti was removed by the Mahatmas, and Prithu emerged, free of these faults.

The first special quality seen in Prithu’s life was that all the Devtas welcomed him. Brahma, Varun, Rudra, Kubera, and others greeted him respectfully. However, when the Suta, Magadha and Bandi came to sing his praises, Prithu stopped them. ‘I have just been created. I will not listen to praises about my actions because I have not done anything yet. Do you expect me to be pleased with false praise?’

A minister is given an honorary doctorate – does that make him an expert on the subject? Nobody becomes a Gnani because of an *upaadhi* (honorary title). A person who takes pleasure in listening to his praises gets immersed in the puja of his own ego. He cannot do the puja of the people. Prithu would not allow the Bandigana to eulogize him.

The Mahatmas advised these professional eulogizers to praise the Raja about the good he would do in future. They showed the way for encouraging the Raja to benefit his *prajaa* (people; the populace).

The first thing Raja Prithu did was to tackle the scarcity of food. He leveled the land, created large lakes and arranged for irrigation. He made sure that all beings got their natural food, including animals, birds and other creatures. He

understood that even snakes and scorpions contribute to the wellbeing of the world, and the need to preserve all species. I have told you about this. These creatures absorb the dosha in Nature. If they are destroyed the doshas awaken and enter the human body and give dukha to people.

Raja Prithu settled trees, shrubs, animals, birds, insects, worms etc where they would thrive. He arranged for the sustenance of all beings. He arranged for the people to get food, shelter, and clothing. People used to crowd the places where food and water were available. Prithu arranged for them to settle comfortably in villages, towns and cities.

After making all this arrangements, Prithu did Yagnas. A Yagna is an *aadhidaivika* (pertaining to the Devtas) system of distribution. It gives subconscious faith that our existence is not limited to our gross physical form.

What does it mean, to do a Yagna? It means that we have a life that extends beyond the life of our shareer. It instills this Gnan in the heart of all – those who do a Yagna, and those who hear about it. When the feeling comes into the heart that a person is not the body; he is the undying Atma, he automatically becomes careful about how he behaves.

Srishti (Creation) extends beyond what we see. There is an Atma that extends beyond the life of the body. We have shraddha for the Veda-Vedanta. The Yagna makes us conscious that the Brahmins must protect and preserve the Vedas for the good of all beings. Let all get their sustenance. Let the Kshatriyas protect – that is their profession. It is the Vaishyas' profession to trade and provide the commodities people need. The Shudras are professional laborers. They do the heavy work and serve the other three *varna* (social classes). All four varnas are given employment in a Yagna. The importance of *agni* (fire), *vaayu* (air), *aakaasha* (space), *jala* (water), *prithivee* (earth), metals, and everything in the world is highlighted in a Yagna.

A quarrel arose in Prithu's hundredth Yagna. Indra is *shatakritu* – he become the Raja of Swarga because he completed a hundred Yagnas. If Raja Prithu also became a shatakritu (one who has done a hundred Yagnas), how would Indra

retain his position? So he began to place all kinds of obstacles in Raja Prithu's Yagna. Raja Prithu was angered. He fought with Indra three or four times, and defeated him. Indra ran away.

'Are you *nivritti-pradhaana* (inclined to withdraw from worldly considerations) or are you *pravritti-pradhaana* (inclined towards working for worldly benefits)?' Bhagwan asked Prithu. 'Do you desire Swarga?'

'No, Maharaj.'

'If you have no desire for Swarga, why this quarrel with Indra? I will give you the fruit of a hundred Yagnas for the ninety nine you have done already. Let Indra hold the position of being shatakritu.'

This means, one should try to settle a quarrel even at the cost of taking a little less or giving a little more. Bhagwan gave Prithu the fruit of completing a hundred Yagnas. Prithu got the fruit of an extra Yagna because he listened to Bhagwan and gave up his resolve of completing the hundredth Yagna. Indra was told that he would retain the unique position of being shatakritu. Indra felt ashamed when Prithu accepted Bhagwan's suggestion so readily. He asked Prithu to pardon him. Prithu was so powerful that even the Raja of Swarga had to come and ask for pardon.

An amazing thing happened after that. Bhagwan came with Indra and made Indra ask Prithu's pardon. After that He gave an upadesha to Prithu, and then He told Prithu to ask for a vara.

It is not the characteristic of a spiritually elevated person to ask for a boon; it is a sign of *heenataa* (inner poverty). A person who is content in his Self wants nothing.

'Ask for a vara,' repeated Vishnu Bhagwan.

Prithu did not say, 'I am fully content in myself. I do not want any boon.' Please note this point. Prithu displayed no pride about his inner contentment. He said, 'Maharaj, having got You, what more can I need?'

See the graceful style of speech! What Prithu actually conveyed is that he had no need to ask for anything, but the manner in which it was expressed was filled with humility. Tears came to Bhagwan's eyes. He was moved by Prithu's nobility. 'Accept something from Me,' He insisted.

'Very well, Prabhu, please give me the boon that I am able to listen to Your katha all my life. Let me always have bhakti for You.'

After that is the description of a very large assembly. I am just giving you glimpses of Prithu charitra. Representatives of all sections of society gathered there. This means that the Raja should occasionally speak directly to his people. He should tell them about his thinking and listen to what they think about his plans.

Prithu lived in the region between the Ganga and Jamuna rivers. This is where he ruled from.

Sarvatraaskhalitaade`shah saptadveepaikadandadhrik,

anyatra braahmanakulaadanyatraachyutagotratah.

(4. 21. 12)

Nobody could defy Prithu's rules. He would punish any wrongdoer in the world. He was obeyed by everybody. The only exceptions were the Brahmins and those who were immersed in Bhagwat-bhava.

All the Devtas also gathered at the assembly. Representatives of different people were present. A description of Prithu is given here.

Praanshuh peenaayatabhujo gaurah kanjaarune`ksha nah,

sunaasah sumukhah saumyah peenaansah sudvijasmitah.

(4. 21. 15)

Prithu was tall, fair, handsome well-built with strong arms and an impressive personality.

Vyanjitaashe`shagaatrashreerniyame`nyastabhooshanah

(4. 21. 18)

He wore no ornaments. The beauty of his physique was clearly to be seen. He gave a speech to those who were gathered there. The Bhagwat describes Prithu's speech. This is important for people who give speeches.

*Chaarū chitrapadam shlakshanam mrishtam goodhamaviklavam,
sarve`shaamupakaaraarthe` tadaa anuvadanniva.*

(4. 21. 20)

A speech should have eight qualities.

1. *Chitram* – it should not be filled with boring, routine topics. It should contain new information. It should be interesting and eloquent.
2. *Chaarū* – it should hold the attention of the audience, start with the matter pertaining to the lives of the people, and show concern for their problems.
3. *Shlakshna* – it should be spoken with clarity of diction.
4. *Mrishtam* – it should be sweet; appealing.
5. *Goodham* – it should have substance and depth.
6. *Aviklavam* – it should not be disjointed. There should be no faults like stammering or long pauses.
7. *Sarve`shaamupakaaraatha* – the feeling in it should be the good of all.
8. *Anuvadanniva* – the speaker should be able to convey an understanding of the feeling of the audience.

A good speech should contain these eight points. Prithu's speech is also described.

Saaram sushthum mitam madhuram. *Saar* means having substance. *Sushthum* means pertinent. *Mita* means concise, and *madhuram* means sweet to hear. I will give you an example.

*Sabhyaah shrunuta bhadram vah saadhavo ya ihaagataah,
satsu jignaasubhirdharmamaave`dyam svamaneeshitam.*

*Aham dandadharo raajaa prajaanaamiha yojitah,
rakshitaa vrittidah sve`shu se`tushu sthaapitaa prithak.*

(4. 21. 21-22)

The first point in Prithu's speech was, 'I am not giving you a sermon.' It is the duty of a *jignasu* (seeker of knowledge) to present his appeal about what he feels in Dharma, when speaking to Satpurushas. The meaning of this is: you are all Satpurushas, and I am a *jignasu*. I place before you the conclusions I have reached after thinking deeply.

In the Valmiki Ramayana, Shri Rama says on several occasions, '*Smaaray`e na tu shikshaye`* - I am reminding you. You already know this. I am not teaching you.'

Goswami Tulsidasji has made Ramachandra say:

Jaun kachu anuchita bhaakaun bhaayee, taun mohi baraje`u bhaya bisaraayee.

'If I say anything inappropriate, please rebuke me without fear.'

This is what Ramachandra told His people.

Prithu said, 'It is you who have put me in the position of a *dandadhara* (ruler) – *prajaanaamiha yojitah, aham dandadhara raajaa* – to punish anyone who does wrong. You made me the Raja to ensure the safety of the people, arrange for everyone to earn their living, and establish righteousness.'

Pay attention to this. Prithu is asking, 'Why have you made me the Raja? The first point is that you made me the Raja. Secondly, you gave me the power to punish criminals. Thirdly, for me to protect the law-abiding and the weak. Fourthly, to ensure that all can live according to their *maryada*. A Sadhu should live like a Sadhu. A Grihastha should live like a Grihastha. People should work as per their eligibility. Everyone should follow the norms of decency and decorum. This is why you have made me the Raja.'

It was not Prithu's intention to put all people in one category. His purpose was to give scope to each to develop their aptitude and attain their potential.

*Yam prithak dharmaacharanaah prithakdharmafalaishinah,
prithak dharmaih samarchanti tasmai dharmaatmane`namah.*

There are different vrittis at different times. People have different cultures. In the same way, the things people like, and the activities they have, change with time. Different people are eligible for different things. Their goals are different. Their condition should be the same in one *kaala* (period of time) as it is in many. People in the whole world are the same as people in one country, and also in the individual antahkarana. The four Yuga (eons in the cycle of Time) – Kali Yuga, Dwapar Yuga, Treta Yuga and Satya Yuga – pervade every day.

The maryada of *kaala-bhe`da* (the differences in the different Yugas) should be there in one kaala as well. The *jaati-bhe`da* (differences in the different castes or groups) maryada should also be there in even one jaati. And, the maryada of *de`sha-bhe`da* (differences in different places) should be there in even one place.

That means, the *vyavasthaa* (arrangement; system) should be coordinated in society. It should not be discordant or haphazard. A painting done by a child is different, a painting done by a young man is different, and a painting done by an old man is different. The rules and arrangements for each group must be according to their need and ability.

*Ya uddhare`tkaram raajaa prajaa dharma`shvashikshayan,
prajaanaam shamalam bhunkte`bhagam cha svam jahaati sah.*

(4. 21. 24)

A Raja who takes taxes and penalties from his people, but does not give the teaching of maryada – *dharma`shvashikshayan* – becomes a partner in their paapa. Not only that – *prajaanaam shamalam bhunkte`bhagam cha svam jahaati sah* – the reins of the kingdom no longer remain in his hands. His influence is destroyed. His glory vanishes.

Tatprajaa bhartripindaartham svaarthame`vaanusoooyavah.

Political leaders say, 'Please strengthen my hand. This will strengthen the hand of the Nation.' *'Bhartripindarthā svaarthame`va* – your hands will be strengthened if you strengthen my hand.'

This is how Raja Prithu spoke to his people. He stressed on the importance of having faith in the Ishwara and the Vedas, respect for the Satpurushas, and working for the good of all. Furthermore, the need to strive for purifying one's own antahkarana.

People began to say that just as a wicked person like Hiranyakashipu was liberated because he had a son like Prahlad, Vena would be liberated because he had a son like Prithu.

The Sanat Kumars appeared just then. Raja Prithu faced no dilemma about welcoming the four Sages, sons of Brahmaji. People show great respect to a Mahatma when he comes to their house, but feel embarrassed to do so in public! Prithu got up respectfully.

Gauravaadyantritah sabhyah prashrayaanata kandharah.

(4. 22. 4)

He bent his head respectfully. He asked the Mahatmas to be seated, and did the *shodashopachaara* (sixteen respectful actions) of puja. For example, if a revered person has come walking, the host first washes his feet. This is called *paadya*. We people were taught this when we were children. There is a lot of dust on village roads. When any respected person came to our house. The first thing we did was to fetch water and wash his feet. Then we poured water as he washed his hands and face. To wash the hands is called *arghya*, and to wash the face is called *aachamani*. This is the method of a respectful welcome. It is also the way puja is done. Then we ask them to sit comfortably, and offer them food and water. After they had finished eating and sat relaxed, we would place questions to them.

To place questions to a learned person is a way of showing respect. Raja Prithu asked, with great shraddha, 'Maharaj, whatever you command me to so will give me *kalyaana* (spiritual good fortune).'

The Sanakadis gave Prithu a sermon on the qualities that should be cultivated in life, for the purification of the antahkarana. They explained how Bhakti should stay in the heart, and how we should understand the need to ensure that *kaama* (avid desire), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed) and *moha* (deluded thinking) are not allowed to become predominant in our life. The best method for this is to do *chintana* (meditate) on the Tattva.

‘A person should not think from the viewpoint of the individual or group. The body of every being is composed of the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and space. Prakriti is one, the Ishwara is one, the Brahman is one, and not separate from the Atma.

Therefore, the *adviteeya bodha* (knowledge of the non-dual Atma) is achieved by the chintan that nothing exists, except the Atma that is not separate from the Brahman. It is not the *adviteeyaatmabhaava* (the feeling that the Atma is the non-dual Brahman). *Bhaava* (feeling) is a minor thing. Not even the *adviteeyaatma sthiti* (the state of being established in the non-dual Atma), because that, too, is a minor thing. That, which is the Brahman – the Paramatma – is the Atma. Everything is established by the Gnan-swarup Atma.

And, there is a state of vritti that comes and goes. The bhava or sthiti that did not exist is created. And, if it is present but does not endure, it is destroyed. Everything in-between is subject to change.

Vrittis have many forms. A vritti is not there in the beginning. It is born and then it is destroyed. It takes on many forms. It is *savishaya* (containing objects of the senses) and also *saashrama* (containing an Ashrama or stage of life). This Gnan-swarup Atma-Tattva, however, is neither born nor does it die. It does not contain multiplicity. The Atma has no *vishaya* (object of the senses) and no *aashraya* (refuge; support). This is the advitiya Atma-tattva.’

This is the sermon given by the Sanat Kumars. They concluded by saying:

‘*Bhagavaanstamave`hi soasmi* (4. 22. 37) – know that you are the Paramatma. The world’s relationship of *kaarya-kaarana* (the effect that is this world – the cause of this world) is very small. Karya-karana is *dvandva* (duality;

complimentary conditions); they are *saape`ksha* (interdependent). So is the feeling of *pramaana-prame`ya* (the proof – that which is proved). The *aatmaa-anaatmaa* (Atma – that, which is not the Atma) is also sapeksha. So is the feeling of Samadhi – *vikshe`pa* (Samadhi – agitation). All these are mutually interdependent. There can be no conclusion of the karya – karana and praman – prameya because they are *anirvachaneeya* (cannot be defined as real or unreal). Their *vive`ka* (separating; discrimination) is done only for the purpose of knowing that our Atma is beyond them, and that it is non-dual.

The praman is *nissvabhaava* (not natural); so is the prameya. The karya – karana are both not natural, nor are a father and son. The Buddhists call it the *prateeti samutpaada* (created when perceived). When the interdependency of both is negated, the vastu (object; the Atma) that is *nishe`dha saakshee* (the witness that is known through negating everything else) is known to have existed before the *nishe`dha* (negation) and will exist after the nishedha. *Brahmaive`damamamritam purastaat brahma pashchaat dakshinashcha uttare`na*. It is all only the Brahman, only the Paramatma, only the advitiya. It is *nirape`ksha* (needing no other). It is not *dvandva* (duality); nor is it a *saape`ksha satta* (an existence that depends on something). It is not a karya – karana bhava.'

Darshitaatmagatih samyakprashasyovaacha tam nripah.

(4. 22. 41)

This is how the Mahatmas gave upadesh about Atmagnan to Prithu. After the upadesh Prithu said, 'Maharaj, everything belongs to you.

Saadhoochchhishtam hi me` sarvamaatmanaa saha kim dade`.

(4. 22. 43).

You, who have experienced yourselves as the *adviteeya prattyak-chaitanyaabhinna* (non-dual, not separate from one's own consciousness) Brahman, who cannot be separated by time, space and matter – if I offer you the entire world of karya – karana, it will be too little in comparison to the Gnan you have given me.

But what is anyone to give you – *saadhuchchhishtam hi me` sarvam aatmanaa saha kim dade`* - all that I have is the *prasaada* (food offered to Bhagwan and then eaten as a blessing) of Sadhus.'

What Prithu meant is that it was the Mahatmas who had created him from Vena's body. 'The Mahatmas are the cause of my being born. They have protected me from personal vanity and listening to false praise. They have helped me to look after my people, do Yagnas, to meet Vishnu Bhagwan, and keep the people content. What can I give you, Maharaj?

*Se`naapatyam cha raajyam cha dandane`tritvame`va cha,
sarvalokaadhipatyam cha ve`dashaastravidarhati.*

(4. 22. 45)

You are worthy of being the Senapati (Supreme Commander of the Army), Raja, the one who punishes, and the ruler of all people. I offer you my life, my wife, son, home, Kingdom, power, the earth, and the treasury. No, I do not offer it to you; it belongs to you!

Svame`va braahmano bhunkte` svam vaste` svam dadaati cha.

(4. 22. 46)'

After this, Prithu ruled over his people for some days, and then he distributed his lands among his sons and went into the forest with his wife, Archi, to practice Yoga.

Gnaanam viraktimadabhoonnishite`na ye`na chichchhe`da samshayapadam nijajeevakosham.

(4. 23. 11)

The *bhraanti* (false understanding) of being a jeeva was removed completely.

Chhinnaanyadheeradhigataatmagatirnireehastattatyaje`achchhinadidam vayune`na ye`na.

(4. 23. 12)

He gave up even the Gnan-vritti he had used for removing agnan, and became one with the Paramatma – *svaroopasthoajahaatprabhuh* (4. 23. 8). He established his Self in his essence and gave up his body. His wife Archi was equally dedicated. She also became one with the Paramatma.

Yesterday, or may be the day before, I had told you about the state of the ladies mentioned up to the fourth canto.

- Draupadi became emotionally detached from her five husbands and obtained the Paramatma.
- Uttara protected her son and obtained the Paramatma.
- Kunti cut away her attachment for her sons and obtained the Paramatma.
- Diti disobeyed the rules of Dharma and had to suffer.
- Shataroopa merged herself with Manu.
- Devhuti obtained Gnan from her son after Kardam became a Sanyasi. She attained the same state as her husband.
- Anasuya was absolutely one with Atri. Because of this, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh became her sons.
- Sati favored her father and disobeyed her husband. She had to die.
- Suneeti took refuge in Bhagwan and got kalyan; Suruchi was turned away from Bhagwan. She got *durgati* (had to go to nether regions after death).
- Archi served Prithu and got the same state as he did.

Thus, I have described Prithu *charitra* (character and life of Prithu) to you. A person who has the wealth of being *anukoola* (inclined towards) to Bhagwan becomes free of anything *pratikoola* (adverse), and because of the bhava of oneness, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh become their sons.

The seven chapters of the fourth canto are devoted to Yagna, so the story of Dharma is given first. The story of Artha is given in the next five chapters. This is the story of Dhruv. He took refuge in Bhagwan, and obtained Artha. The eleven chapters that follow contain the description of Kama, meaning, Prithu's *charitra*.

Seven chapters of Dharma, five of Artha, and eleven of Kama, totaling twenty three chapters, describe the three Purusharthas. The fourth Purushartha – Moksha – is described in eight chapters. The purpose of these eight chapters is to give freedom from *ashtadhaa prakriti* (the Ishwara's power of creation that has eight parts – earth, water, fire, air, space, the mana, buddhi and ahankara). Of these, four chapters are about *nirguna moksha* (liberation from rebirth without having any attributes) and four are about *saguna* (with attributes) Moksha.

The description of Prachinvarhi is given in the serial order of Vishwa (the gross world), Taijas (the subtle world), Pragna (the universal intellect) and the Turiya (where the individual merges with the Brahman). The story of Puranjana comes within this episode. These are the four chapters about nirguna Moksha.

The four chapters about the Prachetas, the darshan of Shiva Bhagwan, the darshan of Vishnu Bhagwan, the accepting of the Grihastha Ashram at the command of the Sadgurus, and Mukti due to Naradji's Satsang.

Thus, of the thirty one chapters of the fourth canto, seven chapters are about Dharma, because a Yagna is *saptatantu* (having seven strands). There are five chapters about Artha, because Artha is absorbed through the five senses. There are eleven chapters about Kama because desires are fulfilled through the five senses, five organs of action and the mana, which total eleven. In Moksha, the eight chapters are divided into four that describe *nirguna mukti* (Moksha without attributes) through the understanding of the Paramatma's forms – Vishva, Taijas, Pragna and Turiya. The *saayuja mukti* (where the jeeva merges into the Paramatma) is given in four chapters from the viewpoint of the *chaturvyuha* (fourfold structure) of Vasudev, Sankarshan, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. These are the four divisions of Sayujya Mukti.

All this is given in the fourth canto.

Prithu's life was like the perfect life imagined by the people in olden times. The great poet Kalidas has presented a thought about what a *poorna jeevana* (a life of wholeness) should be.

*Shaishave`abhyastavidyaanaam yauvane`vishayaishinaam,
vaardhake`munivritteenaam yoge`nantastanutyajaam.*

(Raghuvansha)

A person should study during his childhood, enjoy worldly pleasures during his manhood, develop the vritti of a Muni (ascetic) as he grows old, and ultimately practice Yoga until he becomes one with the Paramatma.

Shri Harsh has imagined four states of *vidyaa* (learning; wisdom)

Adheetibodhaaacharana-pracharanaih.

1. Adheeti means to study.
2. Bodha means to penetrate the subject thoroughly.
3. Acharana means to live according to what you have understood to be right and proper.
4. Prachara means to spread what you have learnt and understood and practiced.

The same thing is given in the *mahaabhaashya* (great commentary) on *vyaakarana* (Sanskrit grammar).

1. *Svaadhyaya kaala* – the time for studying.
2. *Bodha kaala* – the time for comprehensive understanding.
3. *Vyavahara kaala* – the time for proper social interaction.
4. *Prachara kaala* – the time for spreading what you have learnt and lived.

All these were present in the life of Raja Prithu. There seemed no virtue that was absent in his life. He was *poorna* (whole; complete in every way) in the *kartavya* (doing his duty) a person has towards others and ones' self. That means, towards

everything one is connected to, because the Paramatma abides in all beings, including ones' self.

There is a *bhranti* (false belief) in people's minds that a son should have his father's qualities. This *sanskaara* (subtle subconscious impression) has been the cause of considerable injustice in the past. This is mentioned in the Shrimad Bhagwat.

You would have heard the name of Raja Bharat, the son of Dushyant. Dushyant was a very valorous Raja. His wives felt apprehensive that he would not acknowledge their sons if it turned out that they lacked their father's valor, so they put their sons to death! It is wrong to hold on to the insistence that a son must have the great qualities of the father. A boy may acquire the tendencies of his *naanaa* (maternal grandfather) or *daadaa* (paternal grandfather). There is an independent seed in every child. He can develop according to any inherited seed. He can develop according to the situation in the Country, or be molded by the nature of his mother. You will find this everywhere. A son like Vena was born in the lineage of Dhruv. Prithu emerged from the body of Vena. Everything abides in everything. The Paramatma should be respected in all forms.

Prachinvarhi.

A Raja called Prachinvarhi was born in Prithu's lineage. He discarded the *ansha* (part) of Prithu's life that was connected to the welfare of the people, loving worship of the Ishwara, and Satsang.

Our Mahamukhopadhyaya, Pundit Shri Shiv Kumar Shastri, who lived in Kashi, was an acclaimed Sanskrit scholar. It is said that no comparable scholar had been born in the past hundred years. His son was named Vachaspati Misra. Vachaspati means Master of words! Yet he could not even sign his name properly. I had stayed at their house for some time. A great scholar like that having such a son!

When tall crops like sugar cane and millet are sown in a field, the next crop the farmers sow is that of a very low-growing crop like pulses.

Prachinvarhi took only the ansha of Yagna from Prithu. The *kusha* (grass) that is spread to the north of a Yagna-kund (where the sacred fire is lit) is called *praacheenvarhi*. Prachinvari did so many Yagnas that his whole kingdom was covered with kusha.

Praacheenvarhisham kshattah karmasvaasaktsmaanasaam.

(4. 25. 3)

Prachinvarhi's mana was always attached to Karma. It is not good to be involved in some work all the time. *Andhantamah pravishanti* – people who are involved only in doing karmas (activities or rituals) go into darkness (ignorance; lack of right perception). And people who give up karma altogether also go into darkness. If a man sits in an unbroken Samadhi, he wastes the *jagrita avasthaa* (waking state) given by Bhagwan. And if he continues to stay awake, he fails to make the effort to obtain the Ishwara and inner shanti. A human should lead a balanced life and not be one-sided.

When Prachinvarhi did many, many Yagnas –

Naaradoodhyaatmatattvagnah kripaalu pratyabodhayata.

The compassionate Narad Muni felt sorry for Raja Prachinvarhi. He came and stated asking questions to the Raja. 'You are doing so many Karmas, so many Yagnas. What kalyan do you wish to get from them?'

Shre`yastvam katamadraajan karmanaaaatmana eehase`.

(4. 25. 4)

This is the ABC of Vedanta. This is where Vedanta begins. The opinion of Vedanta is that if *parabrahmatva* (the state of being the Parabrahma Paramatma) were to be obtained by sadhan, the fruit of sadhan – or Karma – is limited. Whatever sadhan a person does creates an upheaval in his antahkarana, and a vritti is created. Sadhan results in a *saadhyakaara vritti* (a mental inclination for the object of the sadhana).

What is the *fala* (fruit) of Karma? I am not talking about ordinary people – we Sadhus see the fruit of Karma and know. Each Karma has a *fala* that gets attached to the Aham (I, the individual ego). For example, a person does a Yagna. He will get the *vritti* that he has done something good. The viewpoint of the Aham is the *fala* of having done something good. This seeing of a feeling is called the *fala* by the Shastras. The *fala* can be the form of Swarga; or if some lowly action has been done, the *fala* can be the form of Narak.

In the *dukhaakaara vritti* (the feeling of dukha), the view of the Atma is: *aham dukhi* – I am dukhi. This is called Narak. And, in the *sukhaakaara vritti* (the feeling of being sukhi) the view of the Atma is: *aham sukhee* – I am sukhi. This is called Swarga.

As long as the body is there, this is Swarga-Narak. And, when the body is destroyed, the *vritti* remains. The *vritti* behind the *dukhakara* or *sukhakara*, and its connection with the Aham, is the *paaralaukika* (of realms after death) Swarga-Narak.

The fact is every Karma results in a *vritti* of either *sukha* or *dukha* or *santosha* (satisfaction) or *glaanee* (depression).

Yatkarma kurvato sasyaat paritoshaantaraatmanah,

tat prayatne`na kurveeta vipareetam tu varjaye`t.

Vedanta begins here. If the *vritti* created by effort, sadhan, Karma, etc results in *taadaatmya* (identification) as the fruit of the action, then that can never be the Brahman, because it was not there before the effort of the sadhan or Karma, and the *vritti* will not endure. If the *vritti* comes in-between, the Brahman is not *utpaadya* (something that can be created), *sanskaarya* (something that can be refined), *vikaarya* (something that can deteriorate), and *aapya* (something that can be procured).

Bhagwan Shankaracharya's commentary on the Ishavasya Upanishad begins with this statement. Anandagiriji starts his commentary on the Mandukya Upanishad by saying that nothing that is created by Karma is permanent. Therefore, to do

Karma for *brahma-saakshaatkaara* (a direct personal experience of the Brahman) is futile.

If sadhan is not needed at all, why is the Brahman not obtained at this very moment?

If the Brahman were obtained by effort, it would be something that was subject to destruction, and if there was no effort, the Brahman would never be obtained. This is called *ubhayato paasharajju* (to be tied up on both sides).

If the Brahman was the fruit of Karma it would be *naashavaana* (subject to destruction), but if a person does no sadhan, he will never get the Brahman!

The answer to this perplexity is that the fruit of sadhan is *antahkarana shuddi* – the purification of the antahkarana; it is not the Brahman. It is not a direct personal experience of the Brahman; it is purifying the fourfold mind, or subtle body. It is the removal of the doshas of the antahkarana, like kama, krodha, lobha, moha etc that are seated in the *chitta* (mental inclinations). To remove these faults, and then make the vritti brahmakara is the purpose of sadhan.

Now, what is the Brahman like? If a person does not know what the Brahman is like, how can he make his vritti take on the form of the Brahman? The books on Vedanta deny the possibility of becoming the Brahman. If some jeeva wants to become the Brahman, Vedanta does not say, 'Oh, you are not the Brahman at present, but you can become the Brahman.'

Oh! Then can a person never become the Brahman? Is this what Vedanta says?

No. That is not what Vedanta says. Vedanta does not say that a person can become the Brahman. Nor does it say that a person can never become the Brahman. The method of *brahma-bhaava* (the feeling 'I am the Brahman') is very strange!

Vedanta says, 'You are the Brahman, but because of some *anirvachaneeya* (indefinable) reason your *brahmatva* (characteristic of being the Brahman) is blocked at this time. It is not perceived. This *abhaanaatmaka aavarana* (covering caused because of your lack of true perception) has to be broken.'

How can this covering be broken?

It is a simple matter. Take it that there is an object that is far away. It is there, but you cannot see it because it is beyond your range of vision. Go forward a little. Go a little higher, and you will be able to see it. If it is seen, it will be seen by the eye. That is certain! The eye is the sadhan for vision. Perhaps you will have to use binoculars. You will have to twist and turn a little. You will need to do some sadhans. However, none of these will be of any use unless your vision is unimpaired. Distance or closeness makes no difference, because anything that is seen is seen by the eye.

Similarly, the covering that hides the Parabrahm Paramatma is caused by a lack of consciousness. It can be broken by the vritti. Here, the vritti takes the place of the eye. Just as the eye sees and establishes the presence of an object – it cannot establish the existence of something that is not there – the vritti gives a direct personal experience of the Atma that is there, but not an Atma that is not in the vritti.

There is a book in front of me. The Atma is present in the antahkarana in the same way. If darkness hides the book I have to put on the light to see it. The darkness because of which we cannot see the Atma's eternal, unbroken non-dual essence has to be removed by making an effort. The effort is for removing the darkness; it is not for creating the Brahman or becoming the Brahman! This is the ABC of Vedanta. A person who starts to read the commentary on the Ishavasya Upanishad – meaning, the commentary on the first mantra – will understand this.

Prachinvarhi was engrossed in doing Yagnas. What happens in a Yagna? A Yagna contains five main factors.

1. *Daana* – to distribute what you have accumulated is called daan.
2. *Aadaana* – to sit in front of the fire is a tapasya for garnering inner strength. This is called adana.
3. *Utsarga* – is taking a *niyama* (self-imposed discipline) to be a celibate, have only one meal in a day, sleep on the floor, etc during the Yagna. This gives

the person to regulate his life. A person has to accept certain self-restraints and give up indulgence of the senses. This is called utsarga.

4. *Bodha* – is the comprehensive understanding about the Atma being separate from the body. This is bodha.
5. *Gnan* – is obtained by having faith in the Shastras, and understanding how to extract the quintessence of the Shastras. This is the particular method a person learns in a Yagna.

Getting Gnan about the Shastras, becoming conscious of the Atma being separate from the body, accepting self-restraint in life, sitting before the fire and garnering inner strength, and distributing wealth. These are the five principal factors in a Yagna. However, they do not give the sakshatkara of the Paramatma. Had the Paramatma been outside the mana and indriyas, we would have created situations where we could see the Paramatma the way we see a loudspeaker. However, what is He like, He, who sits within and peeps out from the antahkarana?

For that, we have to light up the vritti for the Paramatma. And, whether that is done by my upadesha or my brother's upadesha, or by reading a book, or by the Veda-Shastras – I am not concerned with the *nimitta* (instrumental factor) – I am telling you about the vritti. It is my absolute, firm opinion of how this vritti should be. The *padaartha* (substance; object) that peeps out of our antahkarana – the Chaitanya – cannot be divided by space, time and matter. That means the Atma is the *saakshee* (witness) of the vrittis that have the form of space, time and matter. It is the witness of all mental inclinations, all thoughts.

The Atma is *aparichhinna* (not subject to being separated) by space, time, and matter. It is the advitiya Brahman. And, nothing exists, except the Brahman. The vritti should be focused on the Atma being the Brahman. This vritti may be given by the Upanishads, Puranas, or the Shastras, in English or Hindi, by the Guru or by a friend. This vritti must arise from some source, and show the Brahman that is the sakshi of the vritti.

Such a vritti rises from the *mahaavaakya* (ultimate statement of the Vedas, Tattvamasi. Tat = That, the Brahman, tvam = you, the Atma, asi = is. You are the

Atma that is the Brahman). It can be in any language, spoken by anybody. A bird can utter 'Tattvamasi' and the vritti becomes Tattvamasi. You may see a book written in Hindi that says, 'You are That', and the vritti arises. I am not so attached to Sanskrit that I insist upon it; nor do I imply any particular speaker.

However, the agnan about the Atma being the Brahman is the covering, and it is vritti that destroys this covering, and the vritti has to arise.

The eye cannot give rise to this vritti because *anantataa* (infinity) cannot be seen. Neither the nose, nor the ears, nor the tongue can create this vritti. The upadesha of the Satpurusha is needed for this vritti to arise and take on the form of the one essence that is the Brahman and the Atma. And, the upadesha has to be, 'You are That', and no other.

So, Naradji came and aroused the consciousness of Prachinvarhi. 'Why are you immersed in Karma? Will you get sukha from this? Will you get dukha? What will happen?'

Prachinvarhi said, 'Maharaj, I don't know anything.'

You see, no external proof is given for the existence of agnan! We cannot establish, 'you have agnan' about anybody. If you feel, 'I do not know the advitiya, ananta Tattva' – if such a vritti comes to you in all honesty, and you identify with that vritti – you are *agnaanee* – you have agnan.

However, if this vritti does not come to you at all, you are either a Tattvagna (one who has Tattvagnan) or you are *moodha* (stupid). Who is there in the world who can say, '*aham idam na jaanaami* – such a vritti never comes to my mind'? When this vritti comes, it shows that you do not know, meaning, you have agnan. You should try to remove the agnan.

Naradji did something marvelous! He said, 'Rajan, you have done these great Karmas, and covered the earth with kusha. Stop looking at the earth and look up towards the sky.'

Prachinvarhi looked up. 'Maharaj!' he exclaimed. 'There are ferocious lions, wolves, snakes, vultures etc. They are looking angrily at me!'

‘The *pashu* (animals) you have killed are gathered there, waiting for you to die. When you go to *paraloka* (the realm after death) they will take revenge.’

Pashu-vadha (killing of animals) is of two kinds. One is killing animals, and the other is of the *manushyaroopee pashu vadha* (killing of humans by treating them like animals). What is the *manushya roopa pashu vadh*? When people organize a Yagna or some Dharmik ritual, they make people work but they don’t pay them for their labor. ‘This is a work for Dharma,’ they say. ‘What is the harm if you have to go hungry to help out?’ This is the *vadha* (killing) of a person who does not know the Shastras.

A group of us had once gone to a village. The people there were having a big festival of *sankeertana* (group singing of Bhagwan’s bhajans). Hundreds of Mahatmas and thousands of people from surrounding villages had come. A tailor came to me. ‘Swamiji, you are all having a festival, but I have to leave this village,’ he said.

‘Why are you going away?’ I asked.

‘The Zamindar Saheb has organized this festival. He told me to make a contribution of forty rupees for it. I offered to give sixteen rupees, but he told me that I should either pay forty rupees or leave the village.’

This was during the days of British rule. The Zamindars were wealthy owners of huge areas of land. They were all-powerful on their lands. I went to the Zamindar. ‘Thakur Saheb, what is this you are doing?’ I asked him. ‘Do you think that this playing of drums will give you kalyan? This tailor plans to leave the village. He will face great suffering. Won’t that result in some loss for you? Can’t you see that *sanskirtan* gives kalyan, but causing suffering to another gives *akalyaana* (misfortune)?’

When you take something from someone without paying them adequately, thinking that they are being made to work for Dharma – or, when you force people to make contributions for a religious ritual – the fruit of the Karma rises, but it wonders who it should go to. The fruit has a dilemma as to whether it should go to the organizer or to those contributed without being paid. The

organizer feels happy with the public acclaim he receives. The actual fruit of the Karma becomes *vikeerna* (scattered; diffused). This is why the Shastras criticize Dharma done by *chanda* (contributions collected from other people).

Dharmaarthamapi ne`he`ta yaatraartha vaaadhano dhanam.

Chanda should not be taken for Dharma, for a *yaatra* (travel), or food.

Raja Prachinvarhi began to tremble with fear when he saw the angry animals he had killed, waiting to avenge themselves when he died. Then Naradji told him the story of Puranjan – this is called *puranjanopaakhyaana*.

The story of Puranjan is amazing. It is about the jeeva (puranjan) and the buddhi (pramada). Puranjan means a jeeva – *puram janayati* – a person who lives in a city (the body is a city of nine gates in which the jeeva abides). A person who causes the birth of this *shareera* (body) is called *puranjana*. It is his karmas that create his body.

In this shareer there is a *pramada* – pramada means that, the very sight of which is intoxicating. In Sanskrit, pramada means a woman – *prakarshe`na maadyayati anayaa* – the sight that intoxicates is pramada. There is one pramada who sits within. If you look carefully you will see that when lust arises in your mana – meaning, when pramada becomes a *kaaminee* (desirable woman), you feel that you will die unless your desire for her is fulfilled. And, when you get a *krodha-vritti* – when pramada feels anger – you feel that you will die if you don't vent your anger in some way. When *lobha* comes, you feel you will die if you don't take what you want, even by unethical means.

Pramada has become the mistress of the house, and the house is the shareer she rules. The jeeva dances to her commands. He sings when she sings, and plays instruments when she does. He desires what she desires. This jeeva – who is the form of a human – has superimposed all the actions of pramada on itself. There is no *vive`ka* (discrimination; separating) of the buddhi and the *che`tana* (consciousness).

Prachinvarhi killed animals in Yagnas, and Puranjan killed them by hunting. Puranjan also did many Yagnas. After he died he was reborn as a woman, got married, and became a widow. At the end we are told the quintessence of this story.

Praane`ndriyamanodharmaan aatmani adhyasya nirgunah.

(4. 29. 25)

Where is your pleasure and satisfaction? Do you feel that it is in some organization or group, a book, or an honorary title? The biggest folly of humans is to throw our *majaa* (pleasure and satisfaction) into something else. A person has the capacity to give majaa to others but he, himself, becomes a beggar for majaa. This is called foolishness. This is a feeling of being impoverished, of lacking something. Destroy this feeling.

All right; at least do this – do not consider yourself to be *heena* (deprived of something). You're a-*heena* (not deprived of anything; whole in itself) swarup is the Brahman! The Brahman is not separated by space, time and matter. It is free of *sajaateeya* (of the same group), *vijaateeya* (of a different group), *svagata* (within itself) *bhe`da* (separateness). It is your Atma!

The Brahman does not mean something red or black or yellow. So, becoming the Brahman is not possible. What will you be, if you become the Brahman? A word that is not ordained – it is indicative of negation – is not something that is made. One does not need to go anywhere to obtain one's Self. You have to go somewhere to get someone else. If it is some object, you keep it away carefully. Our Self always Is. It is not to be locked up in a safe!

Ultimately, Naradji explained this to Prachinvarhi. He got the realization of his swarup, and became Mukta. So much so that he did not give a thought to who would rule after him!

The Prachetagana.

The ten sons of Prachinvarhi, called the Prachetas, are described next. They had Gnan of a very high level. *Prakrishtaani che`taansi ye`shaam te`prache`tasah*. The

command of the Vedas is: *dashaasyaam putraanna aadheehi*. One who gets Gnan through the ten indriyas is called *prache`taa*. The Prachetas were *mahaa-bhaagya* (extremely fortunate). Their father told them to go and do tapasya to garner shakti and beget sons. They went to the Narayana Sarovar near Bhuja, in Kutch.

People who want to do tapasya usually go to the north or to the west. There is a big section on this in our Shastras. Our Mahatmas do not go south to do tapasya. Kapildevji was an enlightened Mahatma. He had vivek. He went to the east to do tapasya, at Ganga Sagar, where the Gangaji merges into the *poorva samudra* (eastern sea). The *poorva samudra* means, beyond the *praag paraak indriya* (outside the indriyas). This is called *poorva* (the east), and the *pashchim* (west) means inside the indriyas – the *pratyak* (that, which is perceived by the senses). *Udaya* (rising) means above. *Dakshin* (south) means the inclination for the *sansaara* (interactive world). This is according to the divisions of the directions as symbols, in Sanskrit. A person interacts seated in his right eye. The eligibility of staying in the objects of the senses is only for those who are as unattached as Kapil Muni.

The Prachetas went to the shore of the *pratyak prateecha* (western) sea. There, they heard sublime music at night. Bhagwan Gauri-Shankar came and gave them the upadesh of doing Bhagwan's bhajan. They got the darshan of Narayana.

Now, see; they got the darshan of Shivaji and also Narayana. People think that getting darshan is of paramount importance. Let us consider it from the viewpoint of the Bhagwat. Shivaji gave the mantra-upadesh, and the Ishtadev (chosen form of worship) was pleased, and gave darshan. Both goals were achieved.

I once heard a very unusual *shaastraartha* (theological discussion). You can judge for yourself, since this is the age of *panchaayatana* (five leaders who judge any issue). In matters of adhyatma, it is the decision of the Mahatmas that is conclusive, not that of a panel of judges, because most people do not have a comprehensive knowledge about adhyatma. Adhyatma is not something that can be decided by vote. If I were to prescribe some medication for you, it would be wrong, you know! If I tell you something about astrology it may be wrong, because I do not have great knowledge about *jyotish shaastra* (the science of

astrology). I can also be mistaken if I give you worldly advice, because I don't know much about worldly matters. But when I speak about the Ishwara I am very confident. What I say about the Atma and the Paramatma is not wrong. It is absolutely true. It is certain that it is correct. It is a subject of my personal experience.

I am telling you about this shastrartha. One gentleman said, 'After getting Bhagwan's darshan there should be no kama-krodha left in the person. So, you also tell people that they will be free of kama-krodha if they get Bhagwan's darshan.'

The other Mahatma said, 'In my opinion, kama and krodha remain even after getting Bhagwan's darshan.'

The man said, 'Oh, Rama! Rama! You say this? Is this your opinion?'

The Mahatma said, 'Look; I warn people, telling them to be careful of any person in this world who says that he has had Bhagwan's darshan and is completely free of kama and krodha. If some cheat assures you that he has obtained Bhagwan's darshan and you believe him, you will be cheated. I warn you also to be wary of anyone who says he met Shivaji and for the darshan of Vishnu Bhagwan. Kama-krodha are seen in the lives of such people.

There are two *paksha* (sides; opinion) – one is that raaga-dvesha is completely eliminated when a person gets Bhagwan's darshan. I also say that there is no raaga-dvesha. However, if anyone says there is no kama-krodha after a person gets Bhagwan's darshan, it is not correct.

There is a lot of difference between raaga-dvesha and kama-krodha. The descriptions in the books on Vedanta say that there being no raaga-dvesha is another matter, because raaga-dvesha is connected to *avidya-asmitaa* (ignorance about the Atma – pride), whereas kama-krodha is connected to the vritti of the shareer. Very few understand this subtle difference.'

One Mahatma said, 'No! No! All doshas are destroyed when a person gets Bhagwan's darshan.' The other Mahatma said, 'The possibility of doshas remains. Both possibilities are valid.'

When the Prachetas went back to their home after getting Narayana's darshan, they saw how the forests had spread over the land. Prachinvarhi had left the land without a ruler. There was a total absence of governance. Large areas had turned into wild forests. Anger rose in the Prachetas when they saw this.

'These trees overcoming our Kingdom?' exclaimed the Prachetas. 'Let them be cut down! Set fire to the jungle.' Unrestrained violence commenced. If there is a fire in the forest, the birds and animals in it will die. So will the people who live in the forest. Their source of livelihood will be destroyed.

Chandrama (the Devta of the moon) came. Brahma came. Both kinds of descriptions are given. The *saumya vritti* (inclination for being mild and gentle) in the antahkarana arose. Chandrama said, 'Why are you venting your wrath on these trees? If there are no trees there will be no rain. If there is no rain, the crops won't grow.'

It is essential for the world that forests are preserved. It is essential that tigers are preserved, because they eat the smaller animals that do much damage. It is given in the Bhagwat that a person who obstructs the vritti created by Bhagwan is also a paapi. For example, snakes eat mice, frogs etc. If humans eliminate the beings that are the natural food of snakes, how will they survive? The Ishwara has created mice, frogs, etc as the natural food for snakes, so depriving them of their natural food will also give paapa. People do not understand this *vilakshana neeti* (the extraordinary scheme of what is right).

'Therefore, O Rajan, do not vent your anger on the trees.'

Who is the target of your anger, is not so important; more important is whether anger comes into your mana or not. Fire burns a piece of wood. An antahkarana, in which anger burns, burns just like the piece of wood burnt by fire. Anger may or may not burn the person with whom you are angry, but it will certainly burn the antahkarana that houses it.

Anger is a flame. It is fire. A person whose heart burns with anger will feel dukha. The Prachetas calmed down. Then, their marriage took place. They got a very good son. The appropriate vritti at the suitable time should be respected.

The ten Prachetas had one wife. You people feel amazed to think of the five Pandavas having one wife. It happens in Creation that sometimes, the female population outnumbers the male population, and sometimes the reverse happens. There are times when there is overpopulation and times when people need to increase the shrinking population. Therefore, the people who make the laws should keep both sides of the matter in mind. A time will come when *himsaa* (violence) will be needed, and a time when *ahimsaa* (non-violence) will be necessary.

When we see the infinity of Time, the Dharma of what is right for that period of time changes. The stream of time alters in spite of being eternal. At times, Dharma becomes adharma, and adharma becomes Dharma. Something that is Dharma in one country is adharma in another. There are different methods of marriage in the world. I have studied this. Some marriages have a time limit – one hour, three days, one year, or six months. Such arrangements are very common among the Adivasi (indigenous tribes), and in other places in the world.

People hold on to *kriyaa* (actions) and *dravya* (materials), and bring dukha into their lives. They do not see with the wider vision of the whole world.

The meaning of *sanaatana dharma* (the eternal principle of the Vedas that have neither a beginning nor end in known time) is to have a perspective that encompasses all places, all period of time, all castes and groups, all objects, all individuals, *kartritvyaabhimaana* (the subtle pride of being the doer) and *akartritva* (the feeling of not being the doer) – all these are taken into consideration when determining what Dharma is. This is no child's play!

The Prachetas became engrossed in worldly pleasures and domestic matters. Naradji came again. This is a leela of Bhagwan's *sankalpa* (resolve)! Prachinvarhi did himsa through Yagnas, so Naradji gave him vairagya. He narrated the parable of Puranjana and gave him Tattvagnan. When the Prachetas started killing the

trees, and became engrossed in domestic pleasures, Naradji came again. 'Look,' he told them. 'You met Shiva and you met Vishnu, but you have not yet got Bhagwan's Bhakti. The heart becomes tender when Bhagwan's Bhakti comes.'

A soldier needs to be hard-hearted, but a *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) needs to be soft-hearted.

Tajjanma taani karmaani tadaayustanmano vachah,

nrinaam ye`ne`ha vishvaatmaa se`vyate` harireeshvarah.

(4. 31. 9)

This is the *janma* (birth), karma, *aayu* (lifetime), mana and *vaanee* (faculty of speech). Five things are named here. 1. Janma. 2. Karma. 3. Aayu. 4. Mana. And 5. Vani.

How are they fulfilled?

Nrinaam ye`ne`ha vishvaatmaa se`vyate` hari eeshvarah.

They are fulfilled when all five of them are used for the seva of Bhagwan, Shri Hari. If they are used only for serving the body, family, and *parichhinnataa* (the things that are separate from the entirety) they are *nishfala* (fruitless). If a person takes something without giving anything in return he becomes a thief.

I will tell you a little story. Karna had a *kavacha* (protective covering) that was attached to his skin. It was a supernatural armor that no weapon could penetrate. Therefore, it was not possible for Arjuna to kill him in the forthcoming Mahabharata war. Arjuna was Indra's son. Out of partiality for Arjuna, Indra went to Karna dressed as a Brahmin. Karna had made a vow that if anybody came and asked him for something when he got up from his morning puja, he would not say no.

Don't see the excellent vow of giving; see the excellent *manovritti* (mental inclination) in this. It is ironic that Karna believed himself to be capable of giving away anything, but he couldn't give the kavach attached to his skin! It is not that

he gives something to the one who asks, or that he gives something to a Brahmin. Karna's viewpoint is, 'What is there in this world that I cannot let go of?'

Giving is not so important; more important is the feeling Karna had, that he could let go of anything in this world.

Indra asked Karna for his kavach. Karna cut his skin with scissors and gave the kavach to Indra, who came as a Brahmin. Indra took the kavach, but when he tried to walk away, his feet sank into the ground. It cannot be that a person takes something and gives nothing in return. This is against the law of Creation. We people are conscious of this, you know! We understand the greatness of *niyama* (rules). A human cannot go on taking all the time; he also has to give.

Indra's feet were stuck to the ground. He had asked for Karna's kavach to benefit Arjuna, but became trapped in an adverse situation. There was an *aakaashavaanee* (celestial voice), 'Indra! You have not given anything to Karna in return of the kavach. That is why your *gati* (progress) has been blocked.'

Here, the feet sinking in the ground does not mean that Indra's feet were actually stuck in the ground. The meaning is, 'Your spiritual progress is blocked. Now you cannot fly back to Swarga.' Then Indra gave Karna a Shakti (supernatural weapon). 'Whoever you use this weapon on will die, even Arjuna,' he told Karna. Indra was able to return to Swarga only after giving Karna this Shakti in return of the kavach he had taken from Karna.

Look; we take light from the Surya, and grumble if we are told to offer two *anjali* (water held in cupped hands and poured as an offering) to the sun. To not express gratitude is miserly. We spit on the prithivi, urinate and evacuate on it. How can we repay our debt to the earth if we refuse to sweep even two feet of the ground? We drink water and bathe every day. If we only dirty the water and make no attempt to make it clean, we will remain indebted to the earth. We breathe the air and if we don't keep it clean – meaning, if we don't do seva of the vayu, we will remain in its debt. We stay in the *aakaasha* (space) – is it only for using abusive words and dirty language? Oh! Spread the chimes of a bell, blow the conch shell, play beautiful music in space!

It is our duty to serve the sources from which we get benefits. This is the manav Dharma. It is the Bhagwat-Dharma.

You take buddhi from the Mahat Tattva (universal intelligence). And this, which is your swarup – your *sva* (Self) – has been borrowed from the Ishwara. Your Aham (I) is taken on loan from the Brahman. Every grain of earth is the swarup of the prithivi and every drop of water is the swarup of jala, every spark is the swarup of agni, every ray of light is the swarup of the surya, every breath is the swarup of vayu, and every *avakaasha* (empty space) in the openings of your nose, ears etc is the swarup of the akash.

In the same way, every jeeva – *sfulingaa vicharanti* – is an *ansha* (portion) of the Paramatma. If we behave with ingratitude towards our personal life, it is ingratitude towards ourselves, not towards others. This is ingratitude towards our *poorna avasthaa* (state of wholeness). We will not think about the Parameshwara.

‘Janma, karma, aayu, mana, and vani are pure only when used for Bhagwan’s seva. The Atma is the *avadhi* (limit in time) of all kalyan. The avadhi of all beings is in Shri Hari. When *aaraadhanaa* (loving worship) of the *sarvaatmaa* (Atma of all) is done, it is the worship of all.’

This is the upadesha Naradji gave. ‘Prachetas, let go of the feeling of being separate entities. Become immersed in the feeling of the paripoorna. Don’t get engrossed in your individual selves, and individual pleasures. Keep connected to the poornata.’

When people sweep their own doorstep and throw the dust towards the doorstep of the neighbor – or spit on the road while walking – do you know who they are dirtying? Whose shareer is it, on whom you spit? It is the sarvatma Bhagwan’s! Everything should be done in the proper manner. You breathe in the air, so you should also light an incense stick. You should put some *havishya* (offering placed in the sacred fire) for the purifying fragrance to spread. You should clean the prithivi and jala. If you live as a jeevatma (individual) you should

have a connection with the Paramatma. You should feel grateful to the Paramatma. You should have gratitude for your Self.

The story of the Prachetas is very interesting. Naradji's upadesha in the episode is excellent. I have not even touched on the other upadeshas! Another good story is given next – that of Priyavrata.

Priyavrata.

Priyavrata's life was also poorna, like the life of Raja Prithu. To some extent the magnificence of Prithu's life was related to worldly matter, but in Priyavrata's case, it was related to the *alaukika* (not of this world; divine). At first, Priyavrata said that he would not accept the life of a married householder. 'I will do Bhagwan's bhajan.' This was during the period between when Prachinvarhi left the Kingdom and before the Prachetas returned to it.

Manu had two sons, Uttanapada and Priyavrata. The story of Uttanapada is narrated first.

Priyavrata was very attached to *vrata* (self imposed austerities). He was fond of the Brahmacharya vrata (vow of celibacy). He said, 'I will listen to the stories of Bhagwan's leelas and stay with Naradji. I won't get involved in the matters of this world.'

Manuji and Brahmaji both came to convince Priyavrata that this was not the right attitude for him. 'Priyavrata, your wanting to become a *baabaajee* (one who renounces the world) is absolutely wrong.'

A principle for manav-jeevan is given here.

'Don't find fault with the maryada created by the Ishwara,' they told Priyavrata. 'Don't say there is dosha in the Grihastha and Vanaprastha Ashrams. Whatever the dosha may be, it is not external. Kama and other doshas are all internal. Our sukha-dukha, our raaga-dvesha, our relationships, our moha – are all in our heart. They are with us.' This is what Brahmaji said – *nibodha taate`damritam braveemi*.

‘My son, understand this point. Don’t find doshas in the Ishwara. All Creation obeys the Ishwara; nobody can flout His rule. If you feel that raaga-dvesha will come into your life if you get married – that it won’t come if you stay in the forest – that is completely incorrect.

Bhayam pramattasya vane`shvapi syaat yatah sa aaste` sahashatsapatna

(5. 1. 17)

If a person becomes careless, these can happen even in a forest, or on a mountain. There are tribes in forests and in the mountains, with women. In fact, the women who live in the cities set off for shopping as soon as their husbands leave for the office. They are very smart. Compared to them, the tribal women are very simple, innocent and beautiful.

A person living in a forest also gets angry. ‘Why did this Sadhu come and sit under my tree?’ Or, ‘Why did he evacuate so close to where I sit for meditation?’ Even there, people throw clods of earth in anger, hurl abuses, and come to blows. Enmities are created. When someone goes to the jungle, he carries the enemies with him.

Jite`ndriyasyaatmarate`rbudhasya grihaashramah kim nu karotyavadyam.

(5. 1. 17)

If a person is *aatmarata* (happy with his Self), *jite`ndriya* (has controlled his senses), and has the right values, what harm can the life of a married householder do to him? This is like fighting a battle in the safety of a fort. Stay safe in the fort and conquer your (inner) enemies, and then go to the forest.’

Priyavrata was convinced. He returned to his Kingdom. He got married, and ruled over the world. He created the oceans and divided the earth into continents with the *ne`mi* (rim of the wheels) of his chariot. He divided his kingdom among his sons. He gave the central portion, surrounded by the salty ocean, to his eldest son. He gave more to other sons as they were born. He gave one lakh to the eldest son, two lakhs to the next and four lakhs to the one who followed.

Why did he do this? He felt that the younger sons should get more.

There is one tradition where the oldest son should get more and another tradition where the youngest should get more. The claim of the eldest getting more is the *e`kaangee* (one sided) Sanatana Dharma, and the other tradition is that the decree of the Sanatana Dharma is that the youngest should get more.

Raja Priyavrata gave what he felt was right. Where are the milk and curds? Where is the *rasa* (sweet flavors)? Where is the salt? Where are these in the atmosphere? He made proper arrangements for all to have the conveniences. He got his sons and daughters married. After enjoying a full life he said, 'There is no substance in this life of luxury and worldly matters. There is no essential value in sons and daughters, or in ruling over the whole world. Ultimately, our mana should be detached from the fetters of moha, and attached to Bhagwan.' He attached his mana to Bhagwan.

I will tell you one thing more. Raja Priyavrata was a great bhakta of Bhagwan, and an exceptionally valorous King, but his vansha – *doobaa vansha kabeera kaa upajaa poota kamala* – Kabir said, 'my vansha sank when I got a son like Kamaal.' Actually, Kamaal was also a Mahatma. However Kabir was disappointed that he had to take Bhagwan's name three times before the corpse came to life. Kabir said, 'He had to take Bhagwan's name thrice! The corpse should have come to life by just Kamaal's thinking about Bhagwan. Or, at most, by saying Bhagwan's name once! But he had to take Bhagwan's name three times!!!'

Priyavrata had a son who became completely infatuated by an *apsaraa* (celestial nymph) that he stood before her with folded hands. 'You are a Mahatma,' he told her. 'You are a jeevan-mukta! You are a great *tapasvinee* (lady ascetic).' He knew perfectly well who she was. He began to touch her feet and catch hold of her. 'I have come into your *sharana* (refuge).' The apsara felt sorry for him and began to live with him. They had a son called Nabhi. Nabhi did not inherit his father's qualities; he inherited the qualities of his grandfather Priyavrata.

Nabhi did a Yagna. Pleased with the Yagna, Brahmaji sent a Devi (lady with divine qualities) from his assembly. Their son was Rishabhdev.

A comprehensive picture of manav jeevan is given in the Bhagwat-Dharma, bad from the bad and good from the good. The changes that happen in the world are described accurately. You will understand the deeper meaning of *manushya jeevana* (human life) if you understand the Bhagwat. Then, you will never get dukha or moha. You will learn what is called the art of living. The art of living is to save yourself from dukha and make others happy.

The Fifth Canto

: 12 :

The fifth canto has twenty six chapters, of which twenty four describe the method of gaining victory over Prakriti, and two describe the method of gaining victory over the Ishwara and the jeeva.

The first five chapters explain how a person, on whom Bhagwan does anugraha, emerges victorious over Prakriti. In one chapter, Bharat's talk dispels Rahugana's ignorance in a few moments. The method of conquering Prakriti by Tattvagnan is shown in this. The next seven chapters show how dhyana and upasana can conquer Prakriti. Then, two chapters show how even *jeevatva* (the feeling of being a jeeva) and *eeshvaratva* (the feeling of being the Ishwara) can be overcome.

I am telling you something special. The method of Ishwara *vijay* (victory over the Ishwara) is that the entire *sthoola* (gross), *sookshma* (subtle) and *kaarana* (causal) *srishti* (world created by Bhagwan) is in the swarup of the Parameshwara. Even Narak is in His swarup! The method 'nothing exists' is not given; the method given is 'everything is the Ishwara.'

A human being has eyes that enable him to see, ears that enable him to hear, *vaak* (the ability to speak), and the lower organs for procreation and evacuation. Similarly, the *viraata purusha* (the Ishwara in the form of the Cosmos) also has the organs for stool and urine, and these are the forms of Narak. Just as these are needed in the human form, they are needed in the form of the Virat Purusha.

The purport of this is if a human being can become free of raaga-dvesha, and reach a state where he sees everything in the form of the Paramatma's swarup, he conquers even the Ishwara.

The first five chapters showed how Raja Priyavrata showed a natural attachment for Bhagwan. The sanskaras of several lifetimes molded his hriday in such a way that Bhagwan's Grace showered on him. He only wanted Naradji's Satsang and nothing else. However, both Manu and Brahma came to him. Manu means the

shakti in the antahkarana for doing *manana* (thinking about spiritual matters) and Brahma means *chiti sangaane`* – this is the *dhaatu* (root). Sangnan means knowledge about many things. The accumulation of the knowledge of multiple things is called the chitta. Manu and Brahma symbolize these inclinations of the antahkarana.

‘Son’, they said to Priyavrata, ‘get some experience of this sansara also. Obey Bhagwan’s command. The things Bhagwan has given in our jeevan are not meant only to be given up, they are also meant for us to use and enjoy. So much so that even the kama, krodha, lobha and moha in our life are not to be destroyed completely.

Bhagwan does not say, ‘Oh, jeeva, destroy these as soon as they arise.’ Had they meant to be completely destroyed, Bhagwan would not have created them in the first place. They are meant to serve some good purpose at the proper time. Let a desire for purity come into your chitta. Let your anger be used against *duraachaara* (the wrong kind of living), *durguna* (wrong tendencies), and *durbhaava* (ill-will). Have moha for the beneficial things. Have some Aham (ego) for cultivating *sadguna* (good tendencies). Thus, the purpose of all the *bhaava* (feelings) in this world created by Bhagwan, are to be used for the benefit of all.

Even *himsaa* (violence) is to be used. There is no need to feel afraid. *Uchchhishta* (food rendered impure when touched by the unwashed hand of someone who is eating) also has a use. It is accepted in Jagannath Puri by the method of bhagavat. It would take up too much time if I gave more examples.

Nothing exists that does not become useful. There is no (instituted) Dharma that is not useful at some point of time, some place, or for some person. Even arsenic and opium have their uses. You can ask an expert of Ayur Veda about this. The purport of this is that there should be no *dosha-drishti* (tendency to find fault) in the Ishwara’s srishti, about anything. All things should be used in the right way. It may not be suitable for you; it may be suitable for someone else. That is immaterial.

Priyavrata obeyed the command of Brahma and Manu. He agreed to get married. He was an excellent householder. He divided the land and the water. He divided the authority. His sankalpa was:

Rajaneemapi dinam karishyaami .

(5. 1. 30).

‘I will turn night into day.’ By the anugraha of Bhagwan he became a person who gained victory over Time. He made seven sections of the water and invented seven *rasa* (flavors). He arranged for the proper governance of the seven lands, and distributed them among his sons. Ultimately he lost interest in all *bhoga* (worldly pleasures) and applied his chitta to Bhagwan. Raja Parikshit chanted Bhagwan’s name. Raja Priyavrata was a bhagavat of the highest level.

Rishabhdev.

There is no rule that the following generation will be a contrast of the present one. Still, the son of Kashi’s great scholar Shri Shivkumar Shastri, was illiterate. However, Shri Rajeshwara Shastri – who was the son of the famous Laxman Shastri Dravina – was even more learned than his father, and more lofty in his lifestyle in some ways. From the viewpoint of tyaga and vairagya he would not go to any *dakshinaa-sabhaa* (an assembly of Brahmins where they were given monetary gifts). He tutored his sons only in the Vedas. He wore only unstitched clothes. He would sit on the ground on a straw mat. He is now very old. I had attended his marriage ceremony.

Similarly, Rishabhdev’s son was also magnificent. He was as brilliant as his father. If you think that the Bhagwat-Dharma contains only guidance of the Grihastha Ashram, and not for Brahmacharya, Vanarastha or Sanyas, that is a mistake. All the Ashrams come within the Bhagwat-Dharma. The young people in present times feel that everybody should flout the traditional norms that have always been followed. That is absolutely wrong. There are all kinds of natures in the world.

I will tell you a special quality of Rishabhdev's life. A question has been raised in the Shrimad Bhagwat regarding Rishabhdev's life. It is written that *siddhi* (supernatural powers) came to Rishabhdev – to be able to move with the speed of the mind, to be able to fly, to be able to know about the past and future, etc – but he told them all to go away. 'Don't even touch me,' he said to them.

Raja Parikshit raised a question here. He asked Shukadevji, 'Rishabhdevji was an *aatmaraama* (merged with his Atma). He was a *brahmanishtha* (knew that his swarup is the Brahman). He had given up all identification with the *de`ha* (physical body) and the *de`hee* (the jeeva who inhabits the body). What harm could siddhis have done to him, had he accepted them?'

The question is not whether siddhis came or not; it is whether siddhis can harm an enlightened Mahatma.

'Maharaj,' said Raja Parikshit, 'Rishabhdev had burnt the seeds of karmas in the fire of Tattvagnan. Even if siddhis came into his life, how could they do any harm? So then, why did he boycott them?'

A beautiful explanation is given in the Bhagwat.

*Na kuryaat karhichit sakhyam manasi hyanaasthite`
yad vishrambhaachchishachcheerna chaskanda tapa e`shvaram.*

(5. 6. 3)

Shukadevji said, 'Rishabhdev refused to accept the siddhis because Mahatmas do not believe that the fickle mana can be trusted to resist temptation. If you want to make someone your friend, do so, but never make friends with your mana. This is what the Mahatmas say.'

The mana says, 'What is the harm in looking? What paapa is there in only seeing?' Then the mana says, 'What is wrong in a little chitchat? What paapa is there in just talking?' After that the mana says, 'What harm is there in just touching? What paapa is there in just touching?'

In the days of British rule, there was opium farming in our village. I remember a mentally unbalanced man coming to our house. He was an opium addict. 'I won't eat the opium,' he pleaded. 'Just show it to me. I just want to see it!' When he was shown a few grains, he would become desperate. 'I will die if you don't give me a bit of opium' he begged. He would fall on the ground in despair. This is what the mana is like.

A vagabond used to come whenever a *bhandaaraa* (feast for Brahmins) was held, wanting food. People would tease him saying he would not be given food. 'All right,' he would say, 'don't give me puris to eat; but just let me see them. I just want to smell them. I love the fragrance of puris.' As soon as he smelled the puris he would start to cry. 'I will die if you don't give me food!' This mana is very strong and very strange.

*Nityam dadaati kaamasyachchhidram tamanu ye`arayah,
yoginahkritamaitrasya patyurjaaye`va punashchalee.*

(5. 6. 4)

The mana has a perpetual opening for kama and krodha. It seems something, believes it to be good, and starts to crave it. When the person does not get what he desires, he gets angry. If he gets what he wants, he wants more – lobha comes into the mana. If his desired object is kept with him, he gets moha.

A sarcastic comment about this is given in the Shrimad Bhagwat, about how Shivaji became infatuated with Mohini.

Yat vishrambhaat chiraat cheerna chaskanda tapa aishvaram.

(5. 6. 3)

The power Shankarji had gathered through eons of tapasya was discharged at the sight of Mohini, because he trusted his mana. He felt that kama could not come into his mana because it had been burnt to ashes.

This is why Rishabhdev refused to accept the siddhis.

What people believe to be siddhis these days are mere tricks of magicians. They have no substance. I am very frank about this. I had taken Sanyas *deeksha* (formal initiation) from Shankaracharyaji Maharaj of the Jyotish Peeth. Karpatreyji Maharaj and I had both taken diksha from him, and accepted the *danda* (staff carried by Sanyasis of the highest category).

A rumor was spread at that time, that Shankaracharyaji creates bundles of notes. He puts his hand under the pillow, or under the cloth wrapped round his shoulders, and a lakh of rupees come out. I knew where the money came from, because he had the idea that I should inherit the position after him. He even made me write the accounts. Karpatriji, however, did not know this because he was constantly travelling, giving discourses. One day Karpatriji came, and asked Shri Shankaracharyaji, 'Maharaj, do you create bundles of notes? If you do, the notes will be counterfeit. If you don't, where do they come from? The notes have the numbers of the Reserve Bank, so they must be accounted for somewhere – whether taken by a thief or brought by a genie!' Now, if you don't understand this, if you believe it to be a siddhi, what am I to say?

Shankaracharyaji had a good laugh at this question. He said, 'You find out where the money comes from; I won't tell you!' He never said that he made the notes. 'If the notes are made by someone, they are fake. If they are lifted from the mint, they are stolen.' I knew where the money came from; I had no doubts about the matter.

Some of us had gone to a Mahatma once. There was some talk about food. Just then a basket of food appeared. It contained hot jalebis and other items, freshly made. Chakraji said at once, 'I will not eat anything, because I suspect that this food is stolen. Has it been paid for, or has it been stolen? The food is freshly made at some halwai's shop. How did it come here?'

There was a lady at Vrindavan. She used to come to our Ashram. When people did *keertana* (group singing of Bhagwan's name) of 'Hare Rama Hare Rama' she would dance with the others. She would produce a *bholu* (earthen cup filled with sweet, thickened milk) from inside her garments. 'This has come from Goloka

(Shri Krishna's realm,' she would say. The matter was investigated. It was found that the sweet was a local product.

Whether it is diamond, pearl, or gold jewelry, it is all made by Nature. *Maurkhasya naastyashadham* – there is no medicine for foolishness. All other illnesses can be treated, but foolishness cannot be cured! The topic of genies and magic is a different matter. I have seen twenty, thirty, fifty times – magicians sending for things that are available only far away. Mahatmas, however, do not approve of such exhibitions, because from the *aadhyaatmika* (pertaining to spiritual matters) viewpoint they are of no importance.

Rishabhdev refused to accept the siddhis. He felt, 'So what if I am a jeevan-mukta? My mana has no need of siddhis.' This is written in the original shlokas of the Bhagwat.

Nine of Rishabhdev's sons became Yogeshwaras (supreme among Yogis). Rishabhdev was a Kshatriya, but eighty one sons of his became Brahmins. Nine became Rajas of nine countries. Bharat became the Samrat (sovereign Emperor).

Thus, Rishabhdev's vansha was bhagavat. Rishabhdev himself was Bhagwat-swarup. I told you this so that you do not harbor the illusion that the sons of a good man will never be good. A good man can certainly have good sons. Every man has good as well as bad tendencies that emerge in some form or other. However, it is not that the good and bad tendencies come from only the father and mother; the jeeva has his own sanskaras and vasanas.

Rishabhdev spoke about the Dharma of an *avadhoota* (a monk who keeps no possessions). His worldly life was burnt by *gnaanagni* (the fire of Gnan). At the time of death he had no need of any sadhan.

As far as the principle of upasana is concerned, it is believed that a person's vritti should be absolutely single-pointed at the time of death. He should be completely focused on his goal. If a person does Yoga, but he is not in Samadhi at the time of death – if some vasana arises at that moment – he will be born again, according to that vasana. Then he will go into a state of Samadhi. With Tattvagnan,

however, it does not matter how he stays, because he becomes Mukta as soon as he gets Tattvagnan.

Don't think that all religions in the world believe in Tattvagnan. Tattvagnan is not possible in the Muslim religion. In their philosophy there is only the *niraakaara* (formless) Khuda who can never be seen by any jeeva. Khuda sends His messages through a Paigambar.

In Christianity also, the darshan of God is not possible. Neither Christians nor Muslims believe in the Mahavakya (You = the Atma are That = the Brahman). Nor do they believe that the Ishwara can be seen.

In the Buddhist philosophy there is no Ishwara. The Charvaks, too, have no Ishwara. And, in case there is, He is not suitable for being experienced personally. It is a very strange method.

The Ishwara of the Nyaya and Vaisheshik schools of thought is nirakara and saguna (with attributes). He can give darshan if He wants. Ishwara darshan by the method of Yoga is *kaalpanika* (imagined). The Yogi does *bhaavanaa* (cultivates the feeling) and begins to identify with the object of his vritti. He experiences the Ishwara as he imagines Him to be. There is no Ishwara in the *nirvikalpa* Samadhi, because this is a state of deep meditation where only the awareness of the Atma remains.

In Sankhya only the *drashtaa* (the Atma that is the witness) exists – how can there be a darshan of the Ishwara? In the Poorva Mimansa principle, it is Karma that gives the fruit; the Ishwara is not obtained.

The Vedanta Darshan has both – those who believe in the saguna Ishwara and those who believe in the nirguna Ishwara. Those who worship the saguna Ishwara believe it is possible to get His darshan by His kripa. The method of darshan of those who believe in the nirguna Ishwara is extraordinary.

Some people say that words can give only *paroksha* Gnan (the knowledge of something that cannot be perceived directly); that words do not know the meaning of the Shastras. Words don't have the capacity to give the

saakshaatkaara (direct personal experience) of an object that is paroksha. Nor can they give the sakshatkara of the *aparoksha* (something known directly, but not through the senses). If the object is paroksha it is paroksha; if it is aparoksha it is aparoksha! If it is our own Self, it is neither paroksha nor aparoksha.

Look; if the Shastras describe Swarga, the *kaalpanaa* (imagination) of Swarga will be paroksha. But if someone tells you, 'Beware! At this moment you have krodha in your mana,' will the krodha be a paroksha gnan or an aproksha gnan? It will be absolutely aproksha! You will realize that anger has indeed come into your mana. When a person tells you to be careful because raaga-dvesha, krodha-lobha, sukha-dukha etc are dominant in your mana, their words will immediately give you an aparoksha sakshatkara.

However, your Gnan about your Self will be a totally *saakshaata* (incarnate) Gnan. If the subject is paroksha it is a paroksha gnan, if it is the self, it is Gnan about your swarup. Words have an immense capacity. Whenever there is a need to get the sakshatkara of things that cannot be perceived by the senses, it is only by the use of words that a person gets the sakshatkara of the swarup of the object. The meaning of sakshatkara is *pratyaksha* – perceived by the senses.

Rishabhdev gathered all his sons and gave them an aparoksha sakshatkara of the Parameshwara. Then he put a stone in his mouth to show that he had no further need for sadhan at the time of his death. This is described in the Bhagwat. *Kritaashma kavalah* – he gave up his body.

Rishabhdev's jeevan was absolutely flawless. Indra was jealous of Rishabhdev's lofty stature. He prevented rain from falling. Rishabhdev created rain clouds with his *sankalpa-shakti* (the power of mental resolve) and made up for the shortage of water created by Indra.

I want to remind you that whatever can be achieved through science in this world – and what will be possible in future – can also be achieved through mental techniques of people with a very highly developed sankalpa shakti. The subtle is more powerful than the gross.

You may or may not believe this, but I have seen a Mahatma who had control over Prakriti (Nature). That Mahatma had come to our village once. At that time we were facing a drought. The crops were all dying.

Close to our village was a village called Hingutargadh. The people of that village came and pleaded with Baba to go to their village. Baba went. The villagers made Baba sit on a wooden seat under the scorching sun. Some four or five hundred people surrounded him. 'Baba, we are dying!' they said. 'No food can be grown. We will have no income and nothing to eat. Baba, if we die we will keep you sitting here under the sun.'

Baba smiled. He got up and went to a shrub and asked, 'Well, my brother, are you thirsty? Do you want water?' He spoke to the plant in this manner. Then he told the people, 'Water will come, but not a single person should go away.' Within half an hour, dark clouds gathered and heavy rain started to fall. The rain was so heavy that the people all fled, leaving Baba sitting there. I was with Baba at that time. I was present when this happened.

I have seen dust storms stopping, rain stopping, and rain starting. If you ask about the importance of these powers from the viewpoint of adhyatma, from the viewpoint of Vedanta or the viewpoint of Bhakti, I will say, 'Nothing.' To be established in the Paramatma is something far above these paltry powers. These siddhis have no value from the Tattva-drishti. Siddhis do not make Mahatmas!

Bharat and Rahugan.

Now, listen to what comes next.

Rishabhdev's eldest son, Bharat, did rule over Bharatvarsha, but he also had a tremendous bhakti for Bhagwan.

The question has been raised in the Bhagwat: when a *kartaa* (doer) does some *karma* (ritual, like a Yagna), he has *kartritva* (the feeling of doing something), but the sankalpa for the Karma is in the antahkarana, and the Karma is done by the shareer. Therefore, the fruit of that Karma should go to the karta.

However, the priests say, '*Indraaya svaahah* – this belongs to Indra.' That does not seem right. The person who does the karma should get the fruit; why should Indra get it?

The Bhagwat gives a beautiful explanation for this.

A doctor once gave me a toy to move over my hands, as a treatment for the pain I had in the fingers of both hands. The hand over which I moved the gadget was not benefited. It was the hand that held the gadget that got the benefit. Have you understood?

If someone does a *shraaddha* (ritual for an ancestor) the question is not whether the ancestor will get the benefit or not. The question is: does the person doing the Karma get benefited or not? Will there be distribution or not – meaning, will the priest, the ancestor and the person doing the *shraaddha* all get some benefit? Will the *shraddhaa* (faith) of the person doing the Karma increase or not? Will not his conviction increase, that the Atma remains even after the body is destroyed? Ultimately, won't he be benefited also?

It is the same with Yagnas, Yaagas, etc. The Bhagwat explains this beautifully.

There is one shareer that belongs to Indra, in which the jeeva is a form of Indra Devta. There is one shareer that belongs to the *yajamaana* (the person who sits for the ritual and pays for it). The *antaryaamee* (the one who abides within) motivates the hand of the yajaman and Indra is also the shareer of the Ishwara. *Agni* (fire) is the Ishwara's mouth. The meaning of this is that the Ishwara in the karta and in the Devta who is worshipped, is one.

When Raja Bharat began to live in solitude and do upasana, an obstacle came into his upasana. This is something that anyone who follows the Bhagwat-Dharma and manushya jeevan must be careful about.

Compassion is an excellent virtue. It is good to be tender-hearted. 'This person is dukhi. Have compassion for him.' Who says you should not do *dayaa* (help someone who is suffering)? Dayaa is an excellent quality. It prompts a person to do good to others. However, the rule of this world is that Sattva becomes Raja

and Raja becomes Tama. Tama becomes Raja and Raja becomes Sattva. This cycle goes on.

If you see a poor, hungry man – he may be a leper – lying on the road, you will feel pity well up in your heart. This is Sattvaguna. Then you will render him some service to reduce his suffering. After that a feeling of pride will come to you, that you did something good. That is Rajoguna. If you sit with him for a while, you will feel disgust. This disgust is a vritti of Tamoguna.

In this world, no vritti is appropriate in every place and at all times, because its result can be in the natural order or against the natural order. This is why *kaarya-kaarana* (effect, the external world – cause; the actions that are the cause of the circumstances) is false. Just as there is no karya-karana in the waking and deep sleep states, there is no karya-karana in the dream state, or the state of Tama. It always results in *anuloma* (the natural order) and *pratiloma* (against the natural order). It has one cause – one effect. The Vedantis quarrel amongst themselves. Is this not agnan?

I am merely reminding you; that is all. You will remember at once that in the principle of Vedanta, agnan is considered to be *anirvachaneeya* (something that cannot be defined accurately). If you say *hai* (it exists), this world cannot be established in the Brahman. It does not exist. And if you say *nahin hai* (it does not exist) why is your life dukhi?

Gnan is established because of the dukha felt by the jeeva; and from the Tattva-drishti agnan cannot be established in the Brahman. So what is the swarup of agnan? It is anirvachaneeya! Now, when people start quarreling over *hai* and *nihin hai*, how can they be considered to be Vedantis? The principle of Vedanta is not in their mind when they quarrel over this.

Neither does agnan exist, nor is it absent – it exists as long as you experience it, and does not exist when you are not aware of it. The life of agnan is limited to this.

Compassion for a deer came to Bharat's heart, followed by *aasakti* (strong attachment). It reached a stage where Bharat could not stay without the deer. He died thinking about the deer, and was reborn in the form of a deer.

The deer that had grown up in Bharat's lap died thinking about Bharat, and was reborn as a Raja. He became Raja Rahugan of the Sindha-Saubaree lands. Their roles were interchanged – the Raja became a deer and the deer became a Raja.

Here, the influence of upasana shows that the deer (Raja Bharat in his previous birth) retained the memory of Bhagwan and its previous birth. After it died, it was born again in a human form. He became an avadhoot. He was called Jada Bharat. He gave Raja Rahugan the teaching of Tattvagnan.

E`kam vishuddham paramaarthatattvam.

Only the one, pristine Paramartha Tattva exists. The *paramaarthata tattva* (the essence of the highest truth) is pristine. This is accepted by the Buddhists as well as the Vedantis. The *prapancha* (interactive world) was shown to be *mithya* (false; a relative truth) by the Gnan of the *adhishtana* (substratum of all that exists, the Brahman). This is a separate principle of Vedanta. The principle of the Buddhists is that the prapanch is shown to be *mithya* by reciprocal concealment. There is no rule in karya-karana, no stability, no pattern of Nature. This is the belief of the Buddhists.

The Vedantis say that the prapanch is negated by the Gnan of the substratum. The Parabrahma Paramatma of the Vedantis is Satya (an eternal truth that can never be negated), whereas nothing is Satya in the Buddhist principle. Yet, one extraordinary point is that even after knowing that *shoonya* (nothing; a vacuum) as shoonya, a Buddhist will interact in the world. And, a Vedanti will also interact in the world, knowing the Atma is the Brahman.

The Gnan of the Satya, of the Paramartha, does not obstruct *vyavahaara* (interaction). A Buddhist who knows *shoonyataa* (the emptiness) will go to China, Lanka, Japan, Sumatra, etc and will work tirelessly to spread his religion. And a Vedanti will also work zealously, knowing himself to be the *akartaa* (not the

doer), *abhoktaa* (not the one who feels pleasure and pain), *aparichhinna* (not a separate entity), *asansaaree* (not of the interactive world) Brahman.

Jada Bharat explained to Rahugan:

Na soorayo hi vyavahaarame`nam tattvaavamarshe`na sahaamananti.

(5. 11. 1)

‘Tattvagnan is something with which you can make yourself free of all fetters, and become supremely independent. Nothing that comes into your life can bind you. There is no restriction of *jaati* (caste or group), karma, the Ishwara, sadhan or the fruit. Stay like a Sovereign Monarch, free from all restrictions and regulations.’

A Sadhu went to someone’s house and asked for *bhikshaa* (food given to Monks). He needed to eat some food. The householder who gave him food asked, ‘Why do you ask?’

‘All that I have is kept in your house,’ replied the Sadhu. ‘I am asking you for what belongs to me. I am not asking for anything that is yours. I did not open a shop. I did not do farming. I have not accumulated even five paisa. I do not light a fire. I am not a beggar; I am a Shahenshah (Emperor). Those who accumulate wealth out of fear for the future are *deena* (impoverished) and *heena* (lacking). They are the beggars. Those who are *nirdvandva* (free of doubts and duality) and *svachhanda* (unrestricted by social rules) are not deen-heen in any way.

Svame`va braahmano bhunkte`svamvaste`svam dadaati cha,

tasyaivaanugrahe`nanaanye`bhunjate`kshatriyaadayah.

A Brahmin eats, lives, and gives by his own Karmas, it is by his kripa that other varnas get their food.

Jada Bharat’s story has a wonderful Tattva – do *dayaa* (have compassion and extend help to the suffering) but don’t get attached. The Bhagwat-Dharma does not expound aasakti; it expounds good tendencies like *dayaa*, *kshamaa* (forgiveness), shanti, prema, etc.

The descriptions given in the next chapter is with the predominance of *de'sha* (place). The Bhagwat is a vast literary work with unfathomable depth, but what I want to say is that Mahapurushas everywhere are always engrossed in the loving worship of the Parameshwara, whether it is in the seven Swargas, seven *paataala* (nether lands), or our earth; in all lands, all Kingdoms, and all times. To show that the aradhana of the Ishwara is done everywhere, the Bhagwat describes geography and astronomy in some detail, and also the realms above and below our earth. The Ishwara is worshipped everywhere.

I want to draw your attention to the fact that the concept of Bharatvarsha has become increasingly parochial. There is a description in the Rig Veda that the Sindhu (Indus) river flowed in the central region of the Bharatvarsha. The land to the west of Bharatvarsha was called *Parasthaana*. The people of Parasthan were Aryans. They were called the *aaryaayana*. That was Iran.

Then there was *Khurasan*. Varun was their Raja. Their *purohita* (officiating priest) was a Rishi – Jarathosta. The Jindavasta contains some thirty or thirty five mantras of the Rig Veda, exactly as they are, except that the method of enunciation is different. He was a close friend of Vasishtha Rishi.

On the east it is described that the Bharatvarsha extended up to the sea of China, in the country of *Faramosaa*.

The script used in Khurasan is described in our ancient books, written in poetry form. It was called *Kharaushthi*. There is a description that Varun was displeased with Indra. Indra fought a war with him. At that time, Varun replaced the *de'va-leepi* (the Devnagari script of Sanskrit) with the Kharaushti script in which the writing is reversed – it goes from right to left. This description is also available.

That, which is called *paaraseeya* – *paarasa* – *paarasee* – if I were to tell you about it from the viewpoint of the ancient times, you would find it amazing! Then why don't I tell you? It is because I know very little about the present geography of the world. I can draw an accurate map from descriptions given in the ancient books.

The youngsters of today will not even imagine that Burma was once a part of India. At present, Burma is a separate country, but when I was a child it was still a

part of India. I have heard that in Pakistan the history books say that Pakistan existed three hundred years ago; but Pakistan has been created in recent times.

A very dear friend of mine was a cook at one point in his life. I have seen him work as a cook in the home of a Grihastha. Later he became a Sadhu and went off to the peak of Gauri-Shankar near Tibet. When he returned after about four years he had become two hundred and fifty years old! Branches of the institute he founded are spread all over India. Some say he is two hundred years old and some say he is three hundred years old. I asked his disciples, 'What is this you have done? He is my friend. He would be slightly younger than me.' They smiled, but made no reply.

My purport is not to describe astronomy or geography. This entire earth, surrounded by the salty ocean, is the Jambu Dweep, and the land in the Jambu Dweep is the Bharatvarsha. You can call it Africa, Europe, Asia, or Australia, etc. From the viewpoint of our ancient books all the land surrounded by salty waters is the Bharatvarsha. Signs of the Bharatiya Sanskriti (Indian Culture) are found everywhere. Statues of our Devis and Devtas have been found in Mexico.

Therefore, not only from the viewpoint of *kaala* (time), but also from the viewpoint of *sthaana* (place), our Bharatiya Sanskriti, our Bharatiya Dharma has pervaded far and wide. Statues and images of the deities we worship are to be found all over the world. There are many variations of the story of Rama.

A Christian gentleman has written a thesis on Rama katha. He undertook extensive research on how the story of Rama is presented in which part of the world, and how it reached that country. Similarly, the Vedas describe different habits and lifestyles of people in different lands. We have to differentiate which lifestyle belonged to which country, and when, in history.

This earth is like a mustard seed on the head of Shesha Bhagwan (Bhagwan in the form of an immense coiled serpent on whom He reclines in the form of Narayana). The whole world is in the *she'sha -aatmaa* (the Atma that remains after everything else is negated). Narak is also in Bhagwan's shareer. A person

whose mind is focused on Narak will reach that place in Bhagwan's body, and a person who meditates on His Gnan will reach His Gnan.

Where do you want to take yourself? A terrible description of Narak is given here.

The Sixth Canto.

The sixth canto is called the Anugraha Skandha – the canto of Bhagwan's *anugraha*, meaning, His compassion and Grace. It has nineteen chapters. Three chapters are about Bhagwan's *naama* (name), and fourteen are about His *roopa* (form; beauty) and dhyana. The last two chapters are about *archaa-poojaa* (rituals of worship).

In the sixth canto Raja Parikshit asks, 'What is the method by which a manushya can escape the suffering of Narak?' The answer is given in this canto, which is called the canto of compassion and Grace.

Bhagwan bestows *kripaa* (Grace; compassion) on all, just as the sun gives light to all. There is no partiality or prejudice in the Tattva. The earth supports a thief as well as an honorable person. Water quenches the thirst of all. Warmth keeps all beings alive. Air enters the nostrils of all, paapi and punyatma alike, and space gives scope for movement to all. In the same way, the Tattva that is the Ishwara pervades all Creation in the form of Sat-Chit-Anand (existence-consciousness-joyfulness) in a non-dual form. It showers Grace continuously, on one and all.

How can we know who Bhagwan's *anugraha* manifests in?

Ajamil.

The sixth canto explains that a person like Ajamil – who is considered to be a great paapi – uttering Bhagwan's naam, shows that Bhagwan has selected him.

Bhagwan just seeks an excuse for showering Grace. 'My brother, I want to save this person.' Bhagwan is an ocean of compassion. He thinks, 'Should I save everybody, or should I save just this person? If I save everybody, My leela of Srishti (Creation) will be destroyed. I must find some excuse for saving people.'

A question was raised once, as to why Ajamil got kalyan. It so happened that a Sadhu came to Ajamil's house and Ajamil's wife put her son before him, and said, 'Baba, please name this boy.' The thought came to the Sadhu, 'Ajamil is a great paapi. He has no virtuous habits. He is of a lowly status. He has a depraved

character. How can he get kalyan? Let me give his son the name of Narayana – then he will at least take the naam a few times.'

Thus, it was not Ajamil's sankalpa that made him utter Narayana's name as he lay dying; it was the sankalpa of the Sadhu who gave his son the name of Narayana. Didn't that Sadhu have the sankalpa that Ajamil should be saved? The sankalpa for his kalyan in the mana of the Sadhu saved Ajamil.

Ajaa means Maya, and ajamil means one who has merged with Maya. There are Ajamils even among us, Sadhus, you know! Ajamil forgot the Veda-Shastras. He forgot *jaati-paati* (caste – community), *aachaara-vichaara* (following the rules of ethical living). He became attached to drinking, gambling, leading a depraved lifestyle, and indulging in violence. Bhagwan's kripa, however, is such that it gives salvation anywhere!

Three chapters describe *naama-smarana* (remembering Bhagwan's name), *naama-kirtana* (singing His names and glory) and *naama-chintana* (meditating on His name).

Fourteen chapters are devoted to dhyana. Indra was corrupted by pride, vanity and arrogance. He was sitting on his throne when his Guru came into the hall. He did not get up or bow down to his Guru. Leave alone asking him to be seated, he did not even look at his Guru. 'I am Indra!' he thought. 'What is Guruji compared to me?' He was corrupted by false abhiman.

Ajamil was corrupted by wrong habits and wrong actions.

Vritrasura was polluted by giving offence to Mahatmas when he was a Gandharva (celestial musician) called Chitraketu in his previous life. The Mahapurushas raised him to a high spiritual level, made him meet Shesha Bhagwan, and gave him Tattvagnan. They also gave him an air plane. Even after all that, Chitraketu criticized Shakar Bhagwan for sitting with Gauriji in His lap. 'What kind of a *dhaarmika* (one who follows Dharma) are you?' he taunted. Gauriji gave him a shaap. He fell from his state of a Gandharva and became an Asura called Vritrasura.

Bhagwan showered Grace even on Vritrasura. Indra was under the paapa of *brahmahatyaa* (killing a Brahmin). Bhagwan purified him. He did kripa on Ajamil.

Diti's sons got *durgati* (fell into lower states). Bhagwan turned them into Devtas. Thus, through Bhagwan's puja, doing His dhyana in fourteen ways, and using the three methods of remembering Him are the nineteen ways by which Bhagwan's anugraha is recognized. If a person starts doing any of these, you can take it that he is now linked to Bhagwan.

Anyone who listens to, or reads the sixth canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat will come to know and understand a great many things about Bhagwan's anugraha.

I will give you an example of one shloka of this canto.

De`hade`hivibhaagoayamavive`kakritah puraa,

jaativyaktivibhaagoayam yathaa vastuni kalpitah.

(6. 15. 8)

There is one *ghadaa* (clay pot) and many ghadas. Why are they all called ghada? They all have the same form. The form is common to them all. We consider them all to be ghada because they all have the same form. So – one ghada and many ghadas – where are they all? They are in the clay! Without the clay, neither is there one ghada nor a group of ghadas.

In the same way, there is the jeeva and this shareer. The *jeevatva* (being a jeeva) and the *shareeratve* (being a shareer) – the *vyakti* (individual) and the *jaati* (group) – appear to be separate in the *dhaatu* (basic element), and the dhaatu is called the Tattva. It is called the Paramatma.

De`hade`hi vibhaagoayamavive`kakritah puraa.

There is neither the *de`ha* (body) nor the *de`hee* (the Atma that abides in the body) in the Paramatma. There is neither the shareer nor the jeevatma. This is what is explained in the wonderful sixth canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

There was a Mahatma who used to stop people from making anybody their Guru. 'What need is there for a Guru in this jeevan?' he would say.

People would come to him and ask, 'Maharaj, what should we do if we don't make someone our Guru?'

'Ask me what you want to ask,' he would say.

'In that case, won't you be our Guru, Maharaj?'

'No. I don't become your Guru. I become your friend, your advisor. That doesn't give me the name of a Guru.'

He had thousands of followers – disciples who were ready to give up their life for him. Yet he never called himself a Guru. He kept his name 'mitra' (friend). It is like the Government rule that does not give monetary aid to a society that calls itself a Religious Society, but gives aid freely if the society calls itself a Cultural Society! The activities are the same, only the name of the activity is changed!

The point is if a person can understand things for himself it is very good. If he can't, he should take the benefit of the knowledge of a learned person, without letting pride or a feeling of inadequacy hamper him. Dilemmas come in everybody's life, and they are solved. If the person knows the method of resolving them, well and good; if not, he must obtain the solution from someone whose understanding is superior to his own.

The Bhagwat describes Ajamil as a learned man who lived a decorous life. A short period of *dussanga* (wrong association) resulted in his *manovritti* (mental inclinations) plunging to a level of depravity. It is a small matter, but worth learning a lesson from – *dussangastu sarvathaa he`ya* – wrong association is always to be given up. Life is colored by the company we keep.

Yaadrishaan sannivishati yaadrishaanshchopase`vate`,

yaadrikgichchhe`ttu bhavitum taadrik bhavati poorushah.

A person's development is according to the kind of people he associates with, the kind of people he serves, and what he wants to become.

That means, there are three factors that make a man what he is – the influence of association, shraddha, and ambition.

1. *Yaadrishaan sannivishati* – this is the association.
2. *Yaadrishaanshchopase`vate`* – this is the shraddha.
3. *Yaadrigichchhe`ttu bhavitam* – this is the ambition.

These are the three influences that mould a person.

Time and again I have seen highly intelligent young men spoilt by bad company. They used to do the daily ritual of Sandhya Vandan, japa of the Gayatri Mantra, and come regularly for Satsang. A few days of undesirable association resulted in a complete change in their attitude. Their questions showed how their belief in the Ishwara and the principle of our Shastras were shaken.

A short period of lowly association changed the direction of Ajamil's life. In our culture we don't talk about who went downwards and who went upwards. When someone sets a lofty goal for himself and then turns away from it, the turning away is called *adhahpatana* (falling to lower levels). There is no place that is up or down in the sky. *Patana* (to fall) means to be corrupted or debased.

Whatever happened externally is another matter, but how Narayana – seated within – awakens, is *anirvachaneeya* (something that cannot be defined accurately). *Kshanasange`na saadhushuh* – the momentary association of a Sadhu, and the word Narayana, awoke the Parameshwara within. Ajamil had used the word Narayana to call out to his son. That was his understanding of the matter. However, the meaning evoked by that word is the essence of why the name had been given to his son.

Ajamil's son had been given this name because Narayana is one of the names of the Ishwara. Bhakti for this name had not vanished completely from Ajamil's mana. He may have used it to call his son, but the name Narayana is Bhagwan's name, and nobody can deny this.

Ajamil had studied the Shastras earlier. He was learned in the Shastras. The meaning of the word Narayana was imbedded in his mana, and that meaning was

awoken when he uttered the word. And, the *paarshada* (Bhagwan's messengers) emerged from it. The parshads emerged from the word Narayana!

I will tell you something about the principle of Bhakti. Many people say that Ajamil did not have shraddha, he had no Gnan, and he uttered the word to call his son. They feel that it is not fair that the *naamaabhaasa* (the illusion of the name) gave kalyan to Ajamil.

There is one srishti in which just namabhasa gives kalyan, so why will the *naama* (Bhagwan's name) not give good fortune? This logic is called the Kaumutika nyaya, showing the magnificence of Bhagwan's name.

I will tell you one principle regarding this. By our principle I mean the principle of the Vedas, Puranas, Shastras and the Sant-Mahatmas. Listening to these repeatedly results in a sanskara becoming imbedded in the subconscious. This sanskara was imbedded so deeply in Ajamil that we don't think it was necessary to take any other name. This is the meaning of our principle.

Actually, every name in this world is a namabhasa! All names belong to the Paramatma. All *roopa* (forms; appearances) belong to the Paramatma. All jatis and individuals are His. So, the actual meaning of every word uttered is the Paramatma. Because of our false understanding, our preferences and assumptions, we have imagined the names to mean different things. 'Narayana is my son' is a *kalpanaa* (something imagined). It is an assumption. It is a false understanding. It is a namabhasa. The true meaning of Narayana is Bhagwan.

The Shaivas have established this with great firmness. Utpalacharya has written a commentary on Dandakacharyaji's Karika (a collection of verses on a philosophical subject). The Shaivas state:

Bhoktaive bhogyabhaave`na sadaa sarvatra samsthitah,

te`na shabdaarthachintaasu na sa shabdo na yah shivah.

This *pratyak aatmaa* (the Atma within) – or the Maheshwara in it – is present as the *bhogyaa* (that, which is experienced) of this entire interactive world. Gnan

creates the object (that is experienced). Gnan makes the *sankhya* (numbers; quantity) and the *parimaana* (measure).

Think about this at leisure, someday. Counting four, five, six – is known through *antargnaana* (the Gnan within). Even the difference between a small and a large object is not based on the object; it rises from Gnan. This is true even for people's interaction.

When we start doing the chintan of the meaning of the *shabda* (word) – *ghata* (a pot), *mriddhika* (clay) – *mriddhika`tye`va satyam* (the clay is the Satya) – is the conclusion we reach. Ghata means clay, a particular form made of clay. The word ghata is imagined in the clay, whereas the clay is factual. This whole world is in the Paramatma, and all names indicate Him.

Shridhar Swami has raised a question. 'It is not possible for anyone to utter the naam at the exact moment of death. There is a lot of talk about *vidhi-nishe`dha* (what is to be done – what is forbidden to do). Very well; is this *anushthaana vidhi* (the proper method of the ritual)? Who is there in the world who can utter Bhagwan's name at the very moment of his death? This rule is futile, because how can anyone obey a rule that is impossible to follow?'

No! No! This does not mean that a person should utter Bhagwan's naam at the exact time of his death. The meaning here is to take Bhagwan's name so that he cannot do any paapa after that.

Mriyamaano hare`rnaama grinan putropachaaritam.

(6. 2. 49)

Shukadevji said, 'When even a person like Ajamil got kalyan, by namabhyasa, who can doubt that a person who chants Bhagwan's naam with shraddha will get kalyan?'

People say that the Hindu Dharma has a predominance of paapa, because of its repeated references to paapa. I say, nowhere else is there such a *nishpaapa* (free of paapa) jeevan to be found! I had once gone to get Shri Haribabaji's darshan. I folded my hands and spoke that old shloka:

*Paapoaham paapakarmaaham paapaatmaa paapasambhava,
paahi maam pundareekaaksham sarvapaapaharo harih.*

Om Shri Bihaarine` Namah.

(I am a sinner. I do paapa. There is always the possibility of my doing paapa. Please save me, Pundareekaksha. Please take away all my paapa. I bow down to You, Bihariji.)

The Vedantis of today don't understand this point. I say this plainly. After saying this shloka, what emerges is – *nishpaapoaham* – 'I am now free of paapa!' Who is the creator of this vritti of being free of paapa? What is the cause? It is the principle of Bhakti to accept before Bihariji that a person is a paapi. When a person accepts his sins before Bhagwan, the Behariji seated within resounds, and the words come out of the bhakta's mouth, 'I am nishpaapa!'

Becoming free of paapa so quickly? In just a moment?

Actually, this is a state of mind. People do not easily understand the principle of Bhakti.

Sadaachaara (a virtuous lifestyle) comes into our jeevan, but *duraachaara* (a wrong lifestyle; wrong activities) comes with *dusanga* (association of the wrong kind of people). Bhagwan's *smarana* (remembering Bhagwan) destroys durachara, and awakens Bhagwan who is seated in the heart. If you ever feel distressed by your paapas and wrong habits, the feeling of lacking virtues, or disgusted with yourself, think about Bhagwan. These dilemmas can come into life at any time. You can get depressed with such feelings all of a sudden. This is the best medicine for making you feel reassured.

*Pratipaapa-prasaktopi dhyaaye`nnimishamachyutam,
bhooyastapasvee bhavati bhaktipaavana paavanah.*

You should never take the support of Bhakti to do paapa. If you do, the paapa will never be destroyed by the method of Bhakti. You will have to find some other method.

There is another point in this – as soon as the vritti ‘I have done a paapa’ arises, you become a paapi. When a person does wrong knowingly, he becomes a paapi. When he chants the name of Bhagwan knowingly, the feeling of being a paapi is destroyed. This is the episode of Ajamil.

Indra.

See another dilemma. With *aishwarya* (wealth and power) comes *mada* (frenzy). There is a *nashaa* (intoxication). Nasha is present in all *vishaya-bhoga* (indulging in worldly pleasures). You may feel surprised to hear this: in the village where I was born, there were some people who would say, ‘What harm can this hundred-rupee man do to me?’

So, nashaa is in all things. The eyes are turned upwards, an aggressive attitude is developed, and the person falls asleep after drinking. These are the results of drink, but the biggest intoxication is that of wealth and power.

One day I saw a young boy throw a silver *thaali* (large platter) into the Gangaji. The servant who was with him said, ‘Babu, what have you done?’

‘Keep quiet!’ said the boy. ‘Why do you speak? I can get ten thalis and give them to you!’ That means, when a person gets wealth without having worked for it, his attitude is different. Very often fathers scrape and save, and the sons throw money away on drink, gambling and women.

Indra became intoxicated by his position as the Raja of Swarga. Aishwarya is good, wealth is good; I am not criticizing them. However, they should not lead to disrespect of Gnan. If learning and Gnan are not given due respect, the person’s aishwarya will not endure. Aishwarya endures only if it is accompanied by buddhi; it will not endure if *nirbuddhi* (absence of buddhi) accompanies it. If it stays, it will stay for only a short period of time.

Anyayopaaarjitam dravyam dashavarshaani tishthati,

praapte` tve`kaadashe`varshe` kalike`va vinashyati.

(Wealth procured by wrong means stays for ten years. Then it is destroyed.)

Wealth will endure only if you live by the rules of Dharma.

Indra got mada. He disdained his Guru. He lost his aishwarya. Now his enemy had a Guru and he had no Guru. The enemy got advice from his Guru and was benefited by it, so Indra made another person his Guru. Indra's new Guru turned out to be deceitful. Indra's original Guru was Vrihaspati, who left because Indra did not show proper respect. The new Guru was Vishwaroopa. If you make an unknown person your Guru, he can betray you. He can deceive you.

Vishwaroopa started offering *homa* (oblations) for the Daityas (sons of Diti, who were Indra's enemies) while doing home for the Devtas. Indra had to kill him. The first Guru was disdained due to Indra's disrespect, the second disdained by being killed by Indra. Indra got the paapa of *brahmahatyaa* (the paapa of killing a Brahmin) – not one, but two! (Insulting a revered person is considered tantamount to killing him.)

The meaning of this is that a human being should be constantly vigilant about not getting carried away by the intoxication wealth and power can give. He should not place his trust in unknown people. Gnan should always be respected.

This was about Indra's life. Now, take a look at Daksha's life.

Daksha's goal was to increase *srishti* (the population). He even obtained shakti from Bhagwan for achieving this. He was the son of the Prachetas – *praache`tasa daksha* – the same Prachetas who were commanded by their father to go into Samadhi, who then met Shankar Bhagwan and also Vishnu Bhagwan, and who ultimately increased the population. Naradji gave them Tattvagnan and they obtained *saayujya* (their souls merged with Bhagwan).

Prachetas Daksha was the son of the Prachetas, and his goal was to expand the srishti. He did Bhagwan's Bhakti. Shakti cannot be expanded unless it is connected to the *samashti* (totality). So Daksha did the aradhana of Vishnu Bhagwan and obtained inner power. He got two kinds of sons – the Haryashva and the Shabalashva. He wanted them to increase the population of the world, but the path they chose was just the opposite of what their father wanted. They became disciples of Naradji. They become *nivritti paraayana* (inclined to withdraw from

worldly involvements). They refused to get married. Not only this, they never returned from the direction they had set off in, to do dhyana. They never met Daksha again. The sons were lost to Daksha.

It often happens in a man's life that the son does not support his father's opinion. He goes contrary to his father's wishes.

Daksha was overcome with anger. Don't think that anger is not *praakrit* (natural). Anger comes to Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma. Those who understand the Puranas know that anger is not always bad. Dvesha is bad.

When a father gets angry with his son for doing something harmful, it is to restrict him. *Kam rupamkshikrodhah kah syaat – kam sukham sukhasrotam runandhi* – krodha blocks the stream of sukha. The heart burns as long as anger lasts. Krodha and prema cannot stay simultaneously in the antahkarana. One is fire; the other is ice.

Daksha was extremely angry. He told Narad, 'It is not right to make anyone a vairagi when they are still young.' Daksha was a Prajapati – the head of a group of people. He said:

Naanubhooya na jaanaati pumaan vishayateekshnataam.

(6. 5. 41)

Nobody can know what *roga* (illness), *dosha* (fault), and dukha there is in vishay-bhoga until he experiences them for himself. Therefore, a young man whose buddhi is not mature – and who does not voluntarily go towards the Ishwara – should not be given the *shikshaa-deekshaa* (teaching-initiation) of vairagya. This violates their Purushartha. What you have done is very wrong.'

I had lived at Haridwar for some time, reading the Panchadashi and Sankaranandaji's commentary on the Gita. Young Sadhus used to come to me to study. When they became friendly they would talk about their regret at having become Sadhus. 'The desire for worldly pleasures is still alive in our heart,' they said. 'We have not enjoyed worldly life. We don't know what worldly sukha is.'

‘What do you plan to do now?’ I asked.

‘What can we do now? We can only become a Mahant (Head of an Ashram) or a Mahamandaleshwara (head of a religious organization). Or, we will sit in some place where we can get some experience of what we want.’

Daksha told Narad, ‘Henceforth you will not be able to stay in one place and mislead anybody!’ He gave a shaap to Narad. Sometimes, a shaap – or words of praise – come true. Daksha was *te`jasvee* (bright with spiritual power). His shaap effected Narad.

Now, see the resolving of another dilemma.

What should be done when a person hears himself being given a shaap? It is not right to give a shaap in retaliation. You should not quarrel with the person who has given you a shaap. Nor should you criticize him. Make good use of the situation.

One father was displeased with his son. ‘Go away to the jungle!’

‘You have blessed me,’ said the son. He went to the jungle and began to educate the people of the forest tribes. He built schools for them. He collected funds and organized a medical center for them in the forest. He was banished from his home, but he brought good fortune to the jungle.

If some shaap comes into your life, you should make an effort to turn it into an opportunity for some good. This is what Naradji has taught us.

Daksha now asked Brahma what he should do.

Brahma means, the four faceted Devta of the *vikaasa* (expansion) of the antahkarana [The four facets are the mana = emotional mind, buddhi = intellect, chitta = mental inclinations and ahankara = subtle pride of individuality] by which the antahkarana is nourished.

‘Look,’ said Brahma. ‘If you create sons, it is possible that Narad makes them vairagis, so create daughters. These Babajis won’t come anywhere near the ladies. Your vansha will continue through your daughters.’

Think a little about the close connection between manav jeevan and the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Chitraketu – Vritrasura.

Chitraketu was the Raja of the Suresenap, in the region of Mathura. His rule extended over the whole world. He had many wives, immense luxury, a huge Army, brothers and friends. He had everything, but he did not have any children. There are many people in this world who are childless. Raja Chitraketu was dukhi because he had no son.

Angira Rishi came to his palace. He explained to Chitraketu, 'Having a son is no guarantee of happiness. Everything in this world gives sukha as well as dukha. There is a dark fortnight and a bright fortnight in every month. A day has night as well as day. All things in life have two sides. Your insistence that you will be happy only if you have a son is absolutely wrong.'

When Babajis see a husband and wife living together they assume that they are very happy. However, they are happy for six hours when they sleep, and for six hours when they work. Otherwise you can take it that if they spend even one out of twenty four hours giving sukha to one another, their Grihastha Ashram is *poorna* (whole). They would be giving each other more sukha when they are newly married, but later their life goes on with the usual ups and downs. It is a blessed couple indeed that stays sukhi all their lives. This is the state of the world.'

The Raja was not impressed. 'I want a son,' he insisted. The Rishi gave him a son. The other wives were jealous of the wife who got the son. They poisoned the boy. The sukha the Raja had got for twelve years was wiped away in an hour of anguish. The Raja tore off his garments, beat his chest and fell on the ground in despair. He was overcome with grief.

The Mahatmas came. Raja Chitraketu recognized that this was Angira Rishi who had given him his son. He also recognized Narad Muni who accompanied Angiraji. Angiraji told Naradji, 'I fulfilled his desire for a son. Now you attend to him.'

There is a description that Naradji said, ‘Raja, you have too much moha. I will summon the Atma of your son.’ [Here, the Atma refers to the Atma that is not yet liberated from rebirth.]

I have a friend who can summon the Atma of even a man who is alive, leave alone a dead person! If anyone present is involved in such activities he mustn’t mind what I say. In these matters, the mental power of the one who summons the Atma is all-powerful. I do not say that the Atma cannot come, but the predominant factor here is the mental power of the one who calls the Atma. There are men who make the subject unconscious. They hypnotize or mesmerize him.

There is a gentleman at Jabalpur who is now very famous. Some time back there was a rumor that when his disciples who are *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirants), gathered with him at night, he made them lie down on the floor and hypnotized them. He would wave his hand over them and they became unconscious for a little while. When they got up he told them they were in a Samadhi. What would the poor boys know about the difference between a Samadhi and a trance induced by another person’s mental power?

The mana is composed of the *pancha mahaabhoota* (the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and space). It is made of *anna* (the food we eat). The colors of the mana are described in the Vrihadaranyaka Upanishad – some are yellow like tamarind, some are like a white blanket, and some like multicolored birds. The mana can have many colors. It can be Sattvik, Rajasik or Tamasik. It emits different rays. The mana is a *saavayava padarth* (a substance that has different parts), placed in our body. We can, if we wish, throw it out with our eyes or with our hands.

You would have heard that Sant Gnaneshwara taught the Vedas to a buffalo calf. The calf did not enunciate the Vedas; it was the mana of Sant Gnaneshwara who recited them. He had transmitted his mana into the body of a buffalo calf.

When the Atma of the boy came, Naradji said, ‘Look how your father is weeping.’

The Atma said, 'I do not recognize him. In which birth was he my father? I have had hundreds of thousands of births and fathers in these births. He must also have been my son in some of them. Who is the father? Who is the son? The stream of life in this world is absolutely independent. Where are there fathers and sons in this? The relationships are of the bodies; they last as long as the body lasts. After that, who belongs to whom? It is quite possible that I will be his father in the next birth.'

Chitraketu's moha was dispelled when he heard this.

Isn't this narration of great use for destroying moha in the life of a human?

Then Chitraketu did the aradhana of Shesha Bhagwan. Shesha Bhagwan was pleased with him and gave him Tattvagnan. He also bestowed the status of Raja of the Gandharvas on Chitraketu. Chitraketu became a Gandharva. Shesha Bhagwan gave Chitraketu the *saguna aatmagnaana* (the knowledge about the Atma with attributes). A human being is not eligible for Gnan about the *nirguna* (without attributes; the Brahman) Atma until he has a strong desire to know that Tattva.

Gnan that is obtained by a Devta's kripa does not negate *daivee-shiakti* (divine power). The Devta who gives Gnan remains of paramount importance, and therefore, the saguna sanskara remains.

When avidya is removed by the correct perception generated by the *mahaa-vaakya* (the ultimate statement of the Vedas; You = the Atma, are That = the Brahman), no importance of the Devta or any individual remains.

Siddhi came to Chitraketu. He began to criticize Gauri-Shankar. Gauriji said, 'Brahmaji respects Shankar, the Sanat Kumars respect Him, Narad and other Mahatmas sit and listen to his discourses on Tattvagnan. From where have you come, as a Creator of this world, that you question our behavior? My son, become an Asura. Never do such a thing again.'

Three things happen when a person gets Tattvagnan.

1. *Jeevatva* (the feeling of being a jeeva) dies.

2. Once jeevatva dies there is no restriction of *vidhi – nishē`dha* (to be done – forbidden).
3. The false understanding of *bandhana* (worldly ties) is removed.

Therefore there is no further need for developing the *saadhana chatushtaya* for getting Mukti. [*Saadhana chatushtaya* refers to the four kinds of qualifications needed for Mukti. 1. Vivek, meaning discrimination between the Atma and all that is not the Atma. 2. Vairagya, meaning detachment for worldly matters. 3. Shat sampatti, meaning accumulating six achievements – shama and dama, meaning mental and physical restraint, uparati meaning absence of any desire for worldly pleasures, titiksha meaning enduring everything with equanimity, and mumuksha meaning a desire to be free of worldly bondage.]

The quintessence of Shiva's jeevan is to be free of possessions. The quintessence of Chitraketu's jeevan was to have siddhis. A person can fall even after obtaining the greatest siddhi, and Bhagwan protects him even there. Chitraketu remembered Bhagwan after he became Vritrasura. When he thought of Bhagwan, Bhagwan protected him.

All these dilemmas come into the life of a human being. The solution is found, fully, in the Bhagwat=Dharma.

There is a story about Diti's sorrow that the Kingdom of Swarga had been snatched away from her sons. Please remember that the Daityas (Diti's sons) and the Devtas (Aditi's sons) are both children of Kashyap. Diti's desire is that the Devtas should not get the Kingdom; her sons should get it. The quarrel between two wives is a very old phenomenon!

Diti also did Bhagwan's aradhana. The result was a glorious child like Prahlad. Indra served Diti with great diligence. Just as there is a *daasa* (servant) of Bhagwan, there is a daas of a daas of Bhagwan – *daasaanudaasa*. Shatrughna was Rama's dasanudaas. Laxmanji is His premi bhakta – he always stays with Bhagwan. Bharatji is a daas who serves Bhagwan even if mean having to stay away from Him. Shatrughna serves Bharat. It is not that Bhagwan is less pleased with the daas of His daas. Bhagwan was pleased with Diti and He was also pleased

with Indra. Therefore, the womb was Diti's but the child became a Devta. This is the power of Bhagwan's worship.

The *smarana* (thinking about) of Bhagwan's naam, doing kirtan of His naam, and uttering His naam – these are the subject of three chapters in the sixth canto. Fourteen chapters are dedicated to His dhyana. Two chapters describe ritual worship, by which many dilemmas in a person's life get resolved.

This is the sketch of the sixth canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana.

The Seventh Canto.

A gardener takes particular care of a shrub that is withering. He gives it extra nourishment, careful watering, medicines, etc so it starts flourishing. In the same way, Bhagwan showers kripa on those who are weak from the viewpoint of adhyatma. A mother doesn't attend only to her healthy children; she also takes care of those who are weak. Bhagwan's kripa is showered on all.

I will tell you about the magnanimity of Sadhus – once, a Seth came to Shri Udiya Babaji's Ashram. He hung up his coat in Baba's hut and went somewhere. There were some hundred and twenty five rupees in the pocket of his coat. Somebody removed them. Baba's bhaktas were extremely agitated to think of someone stealing from Baba's hut. They caught the thief. He was a man who worked at the Ashram. The Seth's money was found. The man was taken to Baba. 'Baba, please dismiss this man. We don't want thieves in your Ashram.'

'What do you think?' asked Baba. 'Do you think only this Ashram is mine? Isn't this whole world mine? My brother, this man is an agnani. I can stay anywhere. It is better that I leave the Ashram and go away. Let him stay. You also stay. Be happy.'

Everybody was stunned to hear Baba's words. Baba said that the whole world belonged to him! 'Wherever the man stays, he will stay in my srishti. He is my *hridaya* (heart). So what if he is a thief?'

You can imagine the effect this had on the thief! Wouldn't he have felt like sinking into the earth? Wouldn't his heart have been washed clean with remorse? Wouldn't it have been purified by his shame and regret?

Gnani bhakta Prahlad.

The question now comes, that all this is very well, but Bhagwan seems to be *pakshapaati* (partial, taking the side of the Devtas). He favors the Devtas and destroys the Daityas. So much so that when a glorious son comes into Diti's womb He makes him a Devta!

No. Bhagwan does not favor anybody. If you ever think about the Ishwara, don't think from the viewpoint of the world of human beings. Isn't the bitter gourd also composed of the panchaboota? Is it not the energy of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and space? The five elements do not reject the creation of such a bitter vegetable. Nor do they reject the sweetness of the grape. They give shakti to the seed to develop its intrinsic quality. Just as the sun gives light to all, the Ishwara gives shakti to the Sattva guna, Rajo guna and Tamo guna to develop. This is what is written in the beginning of the Bhagwat's seventh canto.

Bhagwan gives shakti to Shishupal. He also gives shakti to Hiranyakashipu, and He also gives shakti to Prahlad.

Some people may think it was wrong for the young sons of Daksha to become Sadhus, but is it also wrong to do bhajan? Let the ideal of Prahlad be placed before them. It is not wrong to do bhajan. One should do Bhagwan's bhajan, but one should not take any step that causes one to go back.

The word *prahlaada* in Sanskrit is beautiful. A person who takes Bhagwan's name is called Prahlad – *prahlaadayati lokaan iti prahlaadah* – people were filled with anand when they saw Prahlad. See the influence of Satsang! There was the episode of Ajamil who was ruined by a momentary *kusanga* (wrong association), and there is the episode of Prahlad, who got Satsang when he was still in his mother's womb. The result of this Satsang was that he got kalyan. The teaching given by Prahlad, and his absolute faith in Bhagwan, are quite extraordinary.

Hiranyakashipu gave orders that Prahlad should be bitten by snakes, trampled by elephants, and made to sit in a bonfire, but Prahlad did not give up his faith in Bhagwan. If the word Satyagraha (passive resistance for what is right and true) is applicable anywhere, it is applicable for Prahlad. Prahlad held on to *poornata* (totality); he was not a Tattvagna who had successfully completed his sadhana. Vamdev obtained Gnan while he was in his mother's womb; so did Prahlad.

We use the word *sampradaaya* (a traditional religious Sect) with great respect, in the Adhyatma-Shastra. *Daaya* means by right, *samyak* means fully, and *prakritshta* means superior. That means, the superior Gnan that is given in full, as

the right of the disciple, is a Sampradaya. The disciple obtained Gnan from his Guru and passed it on to his disciple.

In the Sampradaya it is believed that the Sanat Kumars gave a shaap to Bhagwan Narayana's gatekeepers Jay and Vijay, for stopping them from going into Bhagwan's chamber while He was resting. 'Become Asuras,' they said.

Jay and Vijay became Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu.

After giving the shaap, the Sanat Kumars felt remorse. 'They are Bhagwan's servants. They stay at Vaikuntha and serve Him lovingly. We gave a shaap for a nominal mistake, and sent them to the earth as Asuras. It is only right that we should be with them until they get uplifted again.'

So, the Sanat Kumars came in the form of Prahlad. They did everything possible for the kalyan of Hiranyakashipu. They came as Vibhishan and stayed with Ravana and Kumbhakaran. This is not written in the Bhagwat, but it is mentioned in the Sampradaya as a possibility.

Nrisimha Bhagwan manifested.

The seventh canto has three groups of five chapters each – *aadhyaamika* (pertaining to spiritual matters), *aadhidaivika* (pertaining to divine matters) and *aadhibhautika* (pertaining to the material world). Or, they refer to the five causes of karma.

Adhishthaanam tathaa kartaa karanancha prithagvidham,

vividhaashcha prithakche`shtaa daivam chaivaatra pachamam.

(Gita 18. 14)

[The adhishthana, meaning, the substratum that is the Brahman, the karta, the different instruments of action and effort, and the Devtas are the five causes of all that is done.]

The calculation is that three chapters for each of the five karmas done through the Sattvik, Rajasik and Tamasik tendencies.

Some people say that avidya has five parts. 1. *Avidyaa* = ignorance. 2. *Asmitaa* = pride. 3. Raaga. 4. Dvesha. 5. *Abhinive'sha* = identification with the body.

To negate the five parts of avidya there are five parts of *vidyaa*, meaning, right knowledge. 1. Tapa. 2. Vairagya. 3. Aradhana. 4. Yoga. 5. Tattvagnan.

There are only fifteen chapters in the seventh canto. It is clear that Prahlad's jeevan was supremely bhagavat. There is no need to explain that he was totally inclined towards Bhagwan, and had great Bhakti. He made others Bhagwan's bhaktas. Bhagwan manifested as Nrisimha for him and protected him.

Shiva is also a supreme bhagavat. This was shown in the episode of Tripurasura. When Shiva was distressed at being unsuccessful in killing Tripurasura, Bhagwan Vishnu Himself became to tip of Shiva's arrow. That was the only way Tripurasura could be killed.

Tripur means the *sthoola* - *sookshma* – *kaarana shareera* (the gross, subtle and causal body). Or, it means the three realms of *bhoor* – *bhuvah* – *svah*. Or it means the three gunas of Sattva – Raja – Tama. These triads cannot be destroyed without Vishnu-drishti (seeing things as Vishnu Bhagwan sees them). When Vishnu sat on Rudra's (Shiva's) arrowhead, Tripurasura was destroyed. Vishnu's seating Himself on Shiva's arrowhead indicates Shiva's *bhagavatva* (being a bhagavat).

If any difficulty comes into your life, take a *vyaapaka* (all-pervading) view. Don't take a narrow, constricted view. If you take a narrow view one dukha will go but another will come. Don't let your viewpoint take you towards the *seema* (limit); let it take you towards the *aseema* (limitless). Your vyapak drishti will bring you good.

I will tell you of a small incident in this context. Shri Udiya Babaji's Ashram was being built. One day there was heavy rain. The mud huts began to leak. Baba's hut began to break in places. Some of his bhaktas started to bring clay from the bank of a nearby lake, to patch up the broken parts.

The lake belonged to a Vaishnav group. Some four or five hundred men came, carrying sturdy canes. 'Why are you taking clay from our lake?' they asked angrily. Later we found that the Mahant of their Ashram had also come. People came running to Baba, because the situation was turning ugly. 'What is there to worry?' asked Baba. 'The Mahant is there,' they said. Baba got up and went to the spot. He rebuked his bhaktas who were digging the clay. Everyone became quiet. 'If you need clay, you should ask this Baba (the Mahant) where you should take it from,' he said. 'Explain that you need to patch up our huts, because they are melting. He knows everything about Vrindavan. Take the clay from wherever he tells you.'

The Mahant was so pleased to be given importance by Baba that he stood there under his umbrella, guiding the men to the places where they could get good clay. He stood there until sufficient clay was brought and the huts mended.

It often happens that a man is destroyed because of a narrow minded outlook.

Five chapters of the seventh canto give some wonderful upadesha about Dharma. In my opinion, some of the points given here are not found in any of the other books of our Shastras. The Bhagwat has an extremely magnanimous outlook.

One point that must be kept in mind is that Dharma is for us to observe, but the benefits should go to all. This viewpoint is described clearly in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters. Let all get the sukha of the Dharma we nurture. There should be no narrow-minded outlook.

Shrikrishna Bodhashramji was at Delhi once. A friend of mine, who is now very old, asked him, 'Maharaj, why should we do Yagnas? Does it bring rain? If so, why does it rain in the countries where no Yagna is done? If they are benefited by our Yagnas, they have benefited long enough! We will stop doing Yagnas!'

Such a viewpoint should not be there in Dharma. The viewpoint of Dharma is to benefit all.

There is a description that you should consider as yours, that amount which is enough to fill your stomach – in fact, consider as yours that, which has gone into

your stomach. You are the Trustee of that which is still outside your stomach. What is outside belongs to everybody.

Yaavad bhriye`ta jatharam taavat svatvam hi de`hinaam,

adhikam yoabhimanye`ta sa ste`no dandamarhati.

(7. 14. 8)

I am telling you one thing about this: I have not found this point anywhere else, except in the Bhagwat! It is written that if you are a husband, do not serve people by yourself – let you wife join you in rendering service to others.

Apye`kaamaatmano daaraam nrinaam svatvagraho yatah.

(7. 14. 11)

You should also urge your wife to serve others. You should not be narrow-minded and make her stay at home. The next shloka is very interesting.

Jahyaad yadarthe` svapraanaan hanyaad vaa pitaram gurum,

tasyaam svatvam striyaam jahyaad yaste`na hyajito jitah.

(7. 14. 12)

The wife, for whom a man gives up his life, kills his father and Guru, who he loves so much; he should not think that she is only for him, to cook his food and give him comfort. She is also for serving Bhagwan, who manifests in the form of this world.

If a person develops this feeling – *yaste`na hyajito jitah* – he has won over the unconquerable Parameshwara!

I do not know the religions of the West. They say that a person who has become Dharmik (follower of Dharma) becomes immersed in himself; he forgets others. The Dharma I read in the Bhagwat says that a Dharmatma gives good fortune to the whole world. He benefits others through his wealth, through his wife and through his son and through his body. This is the Dharma that the Bhagwat

presents. And, the description of Tattvagnan given in the fifth chapter of the seventh canto is not found anywhere else.

Now, I will give you a list of Prahlad's life, the way a list of subjects is given. The mother did Satsang, and the baby in her womb – Prahlad – obtained Gnan. In human life it is necessary that a pregnant woman decides what she wants her child to be like, and does shravan-darshan accordingly, so that the seed of the right values is sown in the baby to be born.

You would have heard that these days recorded messages are played to people when they sleep, to implant their subconscious with positive thoughts. Similarly, the sanskaras implanted during pregnancy are firmly established in the unborn baby's mind. The mother forgot, but the child did not forget.

See a particular point – it is important for all. Prahlad was the son of Hiranyakashipu. A person who sleeps on a bed of gold is called Hiranyakashipu. He wears gold, he covers himself with gold and he rules with gold. One meaning of kashipu is also *shaasana* (to rule). However, his son was *prahlaada – prakrishto hlaado yasya* – the one who gives superior happiness.

And, he opposed his father's *asatya* (that, which is not Satya, not the right thing), his injustice, when he was just a small child. Don't think that Student Movements are a modern development. Prahlad undertook one in his own house! When he was sent to school, and Guruji went somewhere for some work, Prahlad would gather the boys and give them upadesh about the Ishwara, about Ishwara-bhakti, vivek, and Moksha. It is written in the original shlokas that the students listened to Prahlad; they did not listen to their Guruji!

Jagrihurniravadyatvaat naiva gurbanushikshitam.

What Prahlad taught was *nirdosha* (free of the faults of biased thinking), so the students absorbed it. What their Guruji taught was – *trivargasyopapaadanam* – how to earn wealth, how to do bhoga, how to do karmas, etc. The students had, in a way, turned away from worldly teachings.

What emerges from this is that even a father can be opposed. Nachiketa laid the foundation for this when he opposed his father's practice of giving old cows to

the Brahmins. Similarly, Prahlad opposed his father. All the students supported Prahlad. He became the leader of the students. Don't think that such movements and dilemmas did not exist in olden times. The opposing of the Guru, and Prahlad's strong organization! He endured all the suffering but did not give up his principle. Prahlad's opinion was that it is not necessary to be born in any particular *jaati* (caste or group) to be a superior human being.

*Naalam dvijatvam de`vatvamrishitvam vaasuraatmajaah,
preenanaaya mukundasya na vrittam na bahugnaataa.*

(7. 7. 51)

It is not necessary to be born in a superior jaati in order to be a superior person. A person needs a Sadguru in his life.

Prahlad established one more wonderful principle.

*Naitaan vihaaya kripanaan vimumuksha e`ko,
naanyam tvadasya sharanam bhramatoanupashye`.*

(7. 9. 44)

'I do not want to abandon the poor and the dukhi, and get Moksha for myself alone. I want all the poor, dukhi people to become free of dukha.'

I heard from one Mahatma, 'If ever I meet Bhagwan, I will ask Him to give Mukti to all.'

'Is this possible, Maharaj?' I asked. 'Will everybody become Mukta?'

'In this, the question is not about possible or impossible,' he explained. 'The important thing is the feeling in my heart that everybody should get Mukti. Our hriday should be filled with benevolent feelings. What will happen is not in our hands; it is in Bhagwan's hands. The superiority of the hriday is the superiority of the person. To have a healthy body, be born in a good lineage, be a tapasvi, to have Gnan – *samaadhaaya aapavargyaah* (for Samadhi and Moksha)

– are all methods for Moksha. However, if the indriyas are not under our control, they become methods for bhoga. They become causes of *dambha* (pride; hypocrisy). They don't give kalyan.

*Vipraad dvishangunayutaadaravindanaabha-
paadaaravindavimukhaachchhvapacham varishtham.*

(7. 9. 10)

If there is a Brahmin who has all the superior virtues, like study of the Shastras, practice of Yoga, tapasya, belonging to a superior lineage, etc, but if he is turned away from Bhagwan, a *chaandaala* (low caste person who eats dog meat) who is turned towards Bhagwan is superior to him.

These words come in Prahlad's stuti (eulogy of Bhagwan):

*Manye` dhanaabhijana – roopa – tapah – shrutaujaste`jah – prabhaashva –
balapaurusha – buddhi – yogaah,*

*naaraadhanaaya hi bhavanti parasya punso bhaktyaa tutosha bhagavaan
gajayoothapaaya.*

(7. 9. 9)

'Wealth, the beloved, the family, beauty, tapa, learning, an impressive personality, might, strength, valor, intelligence, or any other factor cannot please You as much as bhakti. Let alone a human, You are pleased with the bhakti of even an animal like Gajendra.'

There is another wonderful point in this episode. After killing Hiranyakashipu Nrisimha Bhagwan shows no tenderness for Laxmiji. She, too, is frightened of this terrible form of Bhagwan. When Bhagwan did not get pleased by the efforts of the Devtas they sent Laxmiji to calm Him. Nrisimha Bhagwan's anger flared up when He saw her. 'This is not an appropriate time for you to come to Me,' He roared. 'Go away!'

Here, Bhagwan wants to be *prasanna* (pleased) with His bhakta, Prahlad. Bhagwan's *yasha* (good name), *keerti* (glory), *pratishtaa* (prestige), is in being

pleased with His bhakta. He resented Laxmiji's intrusion. '*Saa nope`yaaya shankitaa (7. 9. 2)*' – Laxmiji got *shankaa* (doubt) that He may devour her, He looked so ferocious! Shanka can have many forms – it may be that Laxmiji doubted that Nrisimha Bhagwan was indeed her husband, Vishnu Bhagwan, or someone else! In any case, she did not go near Him.

Bhagwan picked Prahlad up and took him onto His lap. This is Bhagwan's great compassion.

Kve`dam vayah kva cha vapuh sukumarame`tad.

'What a tender age – only five years old! And such a delicate body! My delay in coming resulted in so much suffering for you! My dear child! Prahlad, My son, forgive me! Please pardon Me for not coming earlier.

Kshantavyamanga yadi me`samaye`vilambah.

Please forgive Me for delaying, Prahlad. I ought to have come sooner. This cruel man made you suffer a lot!

An amazing thing is seen here:

Nrisimha told Prahlad, 'Ask for a *vara* (boon), Prahlad.'

Prahlad said, 'Maharaj, the servant who serves in order to get something is not a true servant. And, the Swami (Master) who wants only to get service from his servant is not a true Swami. Between You and me there is no such relationship of give and take. Our relationship is one of prema. Even so, if You wish to give me something:

Kaamaanaam hridyasamroham bhavatastu vrine`varam.

I ask You for the vara that no wish to ask for anything ever comes into my mana.'

The fact is as long as a manushya observes the manav-Dharma he remains a manav. And, when he begins to observe the Bhagwat-Dharma he rises above the differences between humans, animals, birds, etc.

Bhaktyaa tutosha bhagavaan gajayoothapaaya.

(7. 9. 9)

Prahlad said, 'My Bhagwan is not pleased with a Brahmin because he has all twelve virtues, but He is pleased with even an animal like Gajendra, who has bhakti for Him.'

Prahlad had no desire for the Kingdom, so Bhagwan said, 'Prahlad! Rule the Kingdom, but listen to My *kathaa* (discourses on Bhagwan) every day, and do Satsang every day.'

A gentleman lived near Vasudhara, some ten or fifteen kilometers higher than Badrinath, for ten years. He liked the place very much. I asked him, 'What is your goal?'

'I have no goal,' he said.

'What do you do here?'

'I do japa of the Gayatri Mantra, and I do pranayam.'

I asked him again what he wanted to obtain in life. 'There is no wish in my heart,' he said. Then, he felt like getting a cottage built there. He came to the lower regions to arrange for funds. When he can go there, he can also come here, to Mumbai, to collect funds, can't he?

Actually, it is lack of prema for the Ishwara that sends people towards the sansara. The person drifts towards worldly pleasures.

Bhagwan told Prahlad to do two things – one was to listen to His katha, and the other was to do Satsang every day. Prahlad gave up his pride of kingship and did Satsang with Dattatreya who was lying on the ground.

There are many amazing things in the Bhagwat. For example, there is a Grihastha. If he urges his wife, son, brother, and others to join him in doing bhajan, he is praised for being a virtuous man. He is promoting Bhakti. However, the Bhagwat-Dharma says that whatever people may say about the world – *yad vadanti yad*

ichhanti (7. 14. 6) – ‘your son will get married here.’ Yes, all right. ‘I want to do this business.’ Very well, go ahead. If you want to impose your wishes on them, it is not *mamataa* (affection for someone) for Bhagwan; it is mamata for your son.

This is certainly a bit difficult for a Grihastha:

*Gnaatayah pitarau putraa bhraatarah suhridayoapare`
yad vadanti udichchhanti chaanumode`ta nirmamah.*

(7. 14. 6)

Allow people to do what they want, without the consideration of your relationship with them. Consider only Bhagwan to be yours; don’t consider these people to be yours and impose your wishes on them. Bhagwan abides in the hearts of everyone; He will give them inspiration. If the person doesn’t go on the right path, Bhagwan will give them a jolt or two to bring him to the right track. Why should you give up Bhagwan’s bhajan?

*Mrigosotra-kharamarkaakhu-sareesripa-khaga-makshikaah,
aatmanah putravat pashye`t taire`sgaamantaram kiyat.*

(7. 14. 9)

Oh, just as there are flies, mosquitoes, worms, intestinal worms, animals and birds, there are your children and grand children. They have all been created from a drop of water. Why should you make your mana agitated for them? What difference is there? See all as your children

A gentleman – he was a Grihastha – would get very irritated whenever I spoke on this shloka. He was a very good man, well respected in society. He would say, ‘Maharaj, let the family improve first. Let the household and the jaati improve. What is this, that you compare us to animals and birds?’ He told me to stop given the explanation of this shloka. When I was dictating the commentary of the Bhagwat, he refused to write this shloka.

Faults are invariable in a human's life. The Bhagwat gives a prescription for their removal.

*Asankalpaajjaye`t kaamam krodham kaamavivarjanaat,
arthaanarthe`kshayaar lobham bhayam tattvaavamarshanaat.*

(7. 15. 22)

A prescription, like doctors give for illnesses, is given for every dosha.

People in our village used to eat a lot of jackfruit. Jackfruit is difficult to digest, but it is digested easily if the person eats a ripe banana after the meal. If he finds it difficult to digest bananas he should chew a couple of cardamoms after eating the bananas. Ayur Veda has many such home remedies.

Dushpacha pache`leemaahmaashaah.

These are *dushpaacha* (difficult to digest), but there are methods for curing the problem.

If there is *kaama* (desire) in the mana, you should give up imagining that the object of your desire will give you sukha – *asankalpaat jayte`t kaamam*. Your conviction that you will get sukha from that object is of great importance. In life it is necessary to use *vive`ka* (discrimination) and cut away the entire idea of the object being necessary for you. This is the way to overcome desire.

Anger will leave you if you stop giving importance to your desires, because anger comes when your desires are thwarted. Why give so much importance to what your mana wants? Give importance to the Ishwara's mana. Give importance to the mana of other people, and you won't feel angry. When lobha comes, give thought to what is ethical and what is unethical, and stay away from the unethical.

A man lost five rupees one day. He was very upset. Someone asked him, 'From where did you get the five rupees?'

'Oh, I stole them'.

Now, did the dukha come when he stole the money, or did it come when he lost it? I am talking about all the black money; five rupees is just an example. You felt happy the day money came, but it was on that day that you invited the bull (dukha) to come and hit you! When the Police and Income Tax Officers come, neighbors come, dacoits come – and even your wife is encouraged to remove some notes from your pocket, you feel dukha! When you get anything through *avive`ka* (lack of discrimination) – or by some dishonorable means – that is when the dukha actually gets an entry into your life.

If you feel apprehensive about someone who may give you dukha in future, you should find out everything about him from the beginning. *Bhayam tattvaavamarshanaat*. If you see a ghost somewhere, make sure that you confront it; the ghost will run away. If you don't face it boldly, the ghost will become established in your mind and give you a lot of trouble.

Dambham mahadupaasayaa (7. 15. 23) – if you have the urge to be proud, and show off your superiority, stay with people who are your superiors. Staying with seniors destroys *dambha* (pride; arrogance).

E`tat sarvam gurau bhaktyaa purusho hyanjasaa jaye`t.

(7. 15. 25)

If a person has bhakti for his Sadguru all his kama-krodha-lobha-bhaya are destroyed automatically. The seventh canto has just this one exposition for destroying doshas. There are many other such prescriptions. I am giving you just a sample.

Look; isn't the Bhagwat-Dharma very useful for the life of a human being? Give some thought to this.

There is another interesting point – when *shraaddha* (a ritual for the benefit of ancestors) and *de`va poojaa* (a ritual worship to propitiate a Devta) are done, it is not advisable to feed many people.

I was sixteen or seventeen when my grandfather died. At that time I was studying Sanskrit grammar at Kashi. I wrote to my Guruji telling him about this, and that I

would not be coming for studies for twenty days. He wrote back saying, 'Shraaddhe` kuryaan na vistaram (7. 15. 3) – vistaara (elaborate expansion) of should not be done in a shraaddha.' Then he wrote his own opinion, 'angavaigunyabhayaat', meaning there is a risk of some impurity coming into the food, a dosha arising out of someone rejecting the invitation, etc. It is written in the original Bhagwat:

Dvau daive` pitrikaarye` treene`kaikamubhayatra vaa,

bhojaye`t susamriddhoapi shraaddhe`kuryaanna vistaram.

(7. 15. 3)

When you do some ritual of worship of a Devta you should feed two Brahmins. If you do a shraaddha for three people you should feed three Brahmins. *E`kaikamumayatra vaa* – if you can't manage three at a time, feed one Brahmin at a time. However, don't feed your own cook or a Brahmin son-in-law as one of the Brahmins! Shraaddha and Dev Karya are destroyed when offered to people who are connected to you, or done in a lavish way.

Vistar and *svajanaarpana* (giving to people who are related) should not be done in any ritual of Dharma; nor should you feed anyone with the thought that they will be useful in promoting your worldly benefits. For example, an introduction to a Minister who can grant you some favor.

There is a remarkable point about Dharma given here. I suggest you read it in detail at your leisure. I am just giving you a sample.

Vidharmah paradharmashcha aabhaasa upamaa chhalah,

adharmashaakhaah panche`maa dharmagnoadharmavat tyaje`t.

(7. 15. 12)

Dharma baadho vidharmah syaat paradharmoanyachoditah,

upadharmastu paakhando dambho vaa shabdabhichchhalah.

(7. 15. 13)

Dharma has five branches. You can take it that if adharma is a tree, it also has five branches.

1. Vidharma – if you do some Dharma that causes distress in someone else's home, it is not Dharma; it is adharma; it is vidharma.
2. Paradharma – Dharma that is applicable for another; it is not applicable for you, is Paradharma. For example, the Dharma prescribed for a soldier should not be followed by a Brahmin whose Dharma is to study the Vedas. If a person begins to follow the Dharma of another, believing it to be superior to his own, it becomes para-dharma. *Paradharma bhayaavaha (Gita 3. 35)* – following the Dharma of another becomes a cause for fear.
3. Abhasa – to assume something to be Dharma without understanding the *vidhi-nishe`dha* (ordained – forbidden), or the quintessence of the Shastras, is called *aabhaasa*. Such Dharma nourishes pride; it does not remove pride.
4. Upama – to pretend to be something you are not, or boast of virtues you don't have, comparing yourself to a *sajjana* (someone known to be very virtuous) is *upamaa*.
5. Chhala – to use words cleverly in order to deceive and mislead people is called *chhala*.

You can see for yourself how useful these points are for a human being.

Now, I will tell you something Vedantis seldom talk about. The Bhagwat-Dharma is a *vyavahaarika* (pertaining to social interaction) Dharma, isn't it? It is not that *paramaarth* (the highest spiritual truth) is something separate from *vyavahara* (social interaction). The Bhagwat-Dharma teaches us how to live an exemplary life in this interactive world.

Someone came and told me that there is a Mahatma who does not accept the Mahavakyas like Tattvamasi. It is very harmful to be critical of these things. I told him to read the Yoga Darshan and the Sankhya Darshan. The Sankhya Darshan has the vivek of *drashtaa-drishya* (discriminating between the seer and that which is seen). They do not accept the Mahavakya. The Yoga darshan speaks about doing

chitta-vritti-nirodha (blocking mental inclinations), where the drashta becomes established in his swarup. There is no Mahavakya in both these schools of thought. It is true that this is not the Vedanta where the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman is established through the Mahavakya. However, Neither Ramanuja, nor Madhva, nor Vallabh accept the Mahavakya. They interpret it differently. Don't we give them their place in the Bharatiya Sanskriti? Aren't the Yoga Darshan and Sankhya Darshan important parts of our Sanskriti? Even if someone does not accept the Mahavakya he can be an elevated human being, taking people forward on the right path. What is the need to get upset about this?

Very well, a vyavaharik form of Vedanta has been presented in the Bhagwat. It says that when *bhaavaadvaita* (the feeling of non-duality; the oneness of all), *kriyaadvaita* (all actions being done for the one), and *dravyaadvaita* (all matter being one) – all three – come into our jeevan, that is the true Advaita. And when these three are absent in our life, the true Advaita is also absent!

This is said in the seventh canto:

Bhaavadvaitam kriyaadvaitam dravyaadvaitam tathaaaatmanah,

vartayan svaanubhootye`ha treen svanaan dhunute` munih.

(7. 15. 62)

This is very interesting. It is said, 'You have Gnan about Advaita, but do you have the advaita Gnan about the *adhishtana* (substratum; the Brahman) that is beyond the *kaarya – kaarana* (effect, the world – cause, the jeeva) and the *svayamprakaasha* (self-effulgent) Atma being one? Do you have this advaita Gnan?

Now I give you another point. The karya – karana are not two. The Brahman is the adhishtana of the karya – karana, and the *prakaashaka* (illuminator) is the Atma. The Mahavakya tells us that the Atma and the Brahman are one. This is Tattvagnan.

If you don't accept the Atma as the Brahman, it will remain a separate object in spite of being *svayam-prakaasha* (self-effulgent). And, if you don't accept the

Brahman as the Atma it will remain *jada* (inert) in spite of being the substratum of all that exists. It will remain *sanmaatra* (pure existence); it will not be *che`tana* (having consciousness). For the Brahman to be chetan it has to be one with the Atma; and for the Atma to be the paripoorna Advaita, to be *aparichhinna* (not separate; whole) it has to be one with the Brahman. The Mahavakya tells us of this oneness. However, here is another point: the world that is seen as the karya – karana –

*Kaaryakaaranavastvaikyamarshanam patatantuvat,
avastutvaad vikalpasya bhaavaadvaitam taduchyate`.*

(7. 15. 63)

Tell me, is the *jagrita avasthaa* (waking state) the karana or is *shushupti* (the deep sleep state) the karana?

The waking state comes from the deep sleep state, and the deep sleep state comes from the waking state. Neither is the cause and neither is the effect. Both are one. The feeling of karya – karana is superimposed from the sanskara of one to the sanskara of the other, and from the second to the first.

Actually, that which is the karya is the karana, and the karya. That means, in vyavhar there is the shuddha Brahman. Or else, the karya – karana is a form of the shuddha Brahman. *Patatantuvat* – like the thread and the cloth are not separate – the thread is the cloth and the cloth is the thread. In the same way, this *prapancha* (interactive world) that is a form of the karya – karana, is one. *Avastuvaad vikalpasya* – there is nothing that is separate from the Brahman! To some, this conclusion is *bhavadvaita* (the feeling of oneness).

In this, the *masti* (delight) is in the fact that we don't need to shut our eyes and go into a Samadhi to obtain the Brahman. Nor do we have to think about the Brahman being in the seventh sea or seventh Heaven, Vaikuntha, etc. The Brahman is here, present, right before us, at this very moment! This is the bhavadvaita drishti of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Now, I will tell you of another drishti.

*Yad brahmani pare`saakshaat sarvakarmasamarpanam,
manovaaktanubhih paartha kriyaadvaitam taduchyate`.*

(7. 15. 64)

What is *kriyaadvaita*? All the actions done by the shareer, mana, and *vanee* (speech) are illuminated by the one advitiya Paramatma who is the substratum of everything. Therefore, all karmas are filled with the Paramatma.

Jahaan jahaan chalaun soyee parikarmaa, jo jo karaun so poojaa.

(All my walking is a parikrama, a circumbulation of worship; all my actions are puja.)

This viewpoint about karma is the Bhagwat-drishti. It is called kriya-advaita.

Then there is dravya-advaita. It is wonderful! You read the kind of Vedanta given in the Panchadashi, Chitsukhi, Advaita Siddhi, Brahma Sutra etc. Don't think that you have not yet got this Gnan; that it is very far from you.

*Aatmajaayaa – sutaadeenaamanye`shaam sarvade`hinaam,
yat svaarthakaamayoraikyam dravyaadvaitam taduchyate`.*

(7. 15. 65)

(Men, women, relatives, and all beings, our self-interest and bhoga, are the same for all; there is no difference between us and others. This thinking is dravyadvaita.)

It is extremely difficult to be such a Vedanti!

I had a friend. He was a Seth who lived in Calcutta. He had a great sense of humor. His name was Jaydayal Kasera. At that time I was a 'Punditji'; now I am a 'Swamiji'! These names have no meaning! So, Kaseraji told me jokingly, 'Punditji, I have got half Gnan, and half is still to be obtained.' I asked him what he meant.

He said, ‘to believe that everyone is ours and that we are everybody’s, is Gnan. So, I believe everybody’s things to be mine – this is half Gnan. The other half – that is yet to be obtained – is that my possessions are everybody’s! If I don’t get this Gnan in this lifetime, what is the hurry? I’ll get it in my next life!’

So, I was telling you, ‘*aatmaayaa – sutaadeenaam*’ – yours, your wife’s and your son’s. And, ‘*anye`shaam sarvade`hinaam*’ – all the beings in the world. ‘*Yat svaarthakaamayoraikyam*’ – the Artha and bhoga of all are one. It is not right to do *pakshapaata* (show favoritism) to anybody. Don’t do pakshapat even for your body, wife, or son. Don’t do injustice to any being in the world. Don’t obstruct their vritti. This is called dravya-advaita. This is the Vedanta of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

What am I to tell you about the description of the Tattva given in the Shrimad Bhagwat? They say:

Yade`ve`ha tadamutra yadamutra tadanviha.

(Katha Upanishad 2. 1. 10)

What is here is the same as what is there, and what is there is the same as what is here.

See the Ishwara – who you believe to be far away – as present in your jeevan, in your vyavhar. And, if you don’t perceive Him *pratyaksha* (directly) here, if you feel you will see Him there, He will not be visible to you even if you happen to meet Him there! If you don’t see the Ishwara here you won’t find Him anywhere! It is necessary to see the Ishwara here.

Kshityaadeenamiharthaanaam chhaayaa na katamaapi hi,

na sanghaato vikaaroapi na prithanaanvito mrishaa.

(7. 15. 59)

(If seen from the actual viewpoint, this body is not composed of the five elements. Nor is it a distortion or a result. It is not separate from its parts, nor is it *anugata* – following them. Therefore, it is mithya.)

Nothing exists but the Paramatma. Only the one advitiya Paramatma is paripoorna.

A number of people came to me and asked whether I would talk on the tenth canto or not. The thing is that I always talk at length on the tenth canto. Once, Bhai Hanuman Prasadji told me to write the Krishna Charita for him, but I was to leave out the first half of the tenth canto. The reason is that the first half of the tenth canto is well-known to all. The second part of Shri Krishna's Charita – which is about His life after He goes to Dwarka; His life in the Mahabharata is what Bhaiji wanted me to write about. I did write it, but by the Ishwara's kripa it got lost.

I once got a letter from a Sindhi gentleman. He wrote, 'By the Ishwara's kripa my father has died.' These people use the phrase 'by Ishwara kripa' very freely!

So, the four hundred-page Ram Charita and eight hundred-page Krishna Charita were lost, by Ishwara kripa!

The Eighth Canto.

Come; let us enter the eighth canto. I will enumerate its contents for you. The eighth canto has twenty four chapters. It is called the section of *saddharma* (the Dharma pertaining to the Satya). It tells us how to conquer the twenty four kinds of Prakriti (natural influences of the tendencies) and obtain the twenty fifth – the Parameshwara.

This canto describes the *anushtaana* (rituals) done by the Sants for achieving this. You will see that the first four chapters are on the subject of doing dhyana of the Paramatma. In this, the first Svayambhuva Manu recites the Upanishads like ‘*eeshaavaasya midam sarvam*’ (everything is the Ishwara). Similarly,

Aatmaavaasyamidam vishvam yat kinchijagatyaamjagat,

te`na tyakte`na bhunjeethaa maa gridhah kasyasvidghanam.

(8. 1. 10)

1. See the Ishwara in all – *aatmaavaasya midam vishvam*.

2. *Te`na tyakte`na bhunjeethaa* – retain a feeling of renunciation even while doing bhoga, that this, too, will not remain.

3. *Maa gridhah kasyasvidghanam* – don’t become a vulture for wealth. In this world, who is the owner of wealth?

The conclusion regarding *dhana* (wealth) is the meaning of ‘*maa gridhah*’ – don’t try to stop anything. Let it flow.

The conclusion regarding bhoga is to retain the feeling, even while enjoying worldly pleasures, that nothing is permanent.

The conclusion regarding the Ishwara and Moksha is that everything is the Paramatma. And the conclusion regarding Dharma is to go on doing rituals of Dharma.

Kurvanne`ve`ha karmaani jijeevishe`chchhatamsamaah,

(Ishavasya Upanishad 3. 2)

There is a clear decision regarding Kama and Moksha.

Manu was reciting this passage from the viewpoint of Moksha, when an Asura appeared to kill him. Bhagwan protected Manuji. He killed the Asura. Bhagwan feels fulfilled when He protects a person who is going on the path of Gnan.

I know a Mahatma. He had planted some guava saplings in the sandy banks of the Gangaji. He stopped a farmer from trampling over them. 'Don't go by this path with your oxen,' he said. 'I have planted some trees here.'

'How can trees grow in sand?' scoffed the farmer. 'What is this meaningless play?'

The Mahatma said, 'No. I won't let you go from here.'

The man lifted his staff to hit the Mahatma. His hand remained uplifted, as though frozen. The oxen became unconscious.

I asked the Mahatma, 'What have you done, Maharaj?'

'I have done nothing,' he said. 'I felt like laughing because there is no field, no trees and nobody is doing anything wrong. What is the fight about?'

However, the guava trees planted by the Mahatma all took root and flourished. Later, he told me, 'I did not do anything, but the Devtas are always vigilant that nobody should cause suffering to a Satpurusha. If someone does cause suffering to a Satpurusha, they sometimes inflict some suffering on that person.'

This is how Bhagwan protected Manu. This description is given in the first chapter of the eighth canto. The meaning of this is that if you walk on the path of Gnan, the *antaraatmaa* (the Atma within) of the *samashti* (totality) will protect you. The prithivi will protect you, jala will protect you, agni will protect you, the sun and the moon will protect you, and *vaayu* (the air) Devta will protect you, because you do not oppose anyone. You wish to become the Atma of all; or, you have become the Atma of all.

The story of Gajendra is given in three chapters. This is also a wonderful episode, very useful for the life of humans.

Raja Indradyumna left his kingdom and lived in solitude, doing Bhagwan's aradhana. Agastya Rishi was pleased to hear that such a great Monarch gave up his vast Kingdom and got engrossed in doing Bhagwan's aradhana. 'Let me pay him a visit,' he thought. See the kripa of a Mahatma!

Now, when the servant informed Indradyumna of Agastya Rishi's arrival, the Raja sent back a message, 'Tell the Mahatma to sit on the bench near the door. Tell him I am doing Bhagwan's puja. I will meet him when the puja is done.'

Oh, Bhagwan worships His Mahatmas! Bhagwan's Bhagwan has come and you make him wait? All Bhagwan's glory is because of His Mahatmas. If the Mahatmas were to stop describing Bhagwan's greatness, it would be difficult for anyone to obtain Bhagwan!

The Raja sent a message that he would meet Agastyaji after finishing his puja. 'This Raja places a few flowers, grains of rice, chandan and fruits before Bhagwan, and thinks that there is no one like him!' thought Agastyaji. 'He has become insensible. So.....' Agastyaji gave Raja Indradyumna a shaap. 'Become an elephant! You have great arrogance; let it be nurtured.' Indradyumna became Gajendra (the king of elephants). However, he had done Bhagwan's aradhana, and the sanskara remained with him.

This episode gives the teaching that if any Sant-Mahatma comes to your house you should welcome him respectfully at once, even if it means interrupting your puja. The puja can be completed after the Mahatma leaves. This pleases Bhagwan, because He also has bhakti for the Sant-Mahatmas who have bhakti for Him. It is not proper to have pride for the puja and dhyana you do. The second point is that even after becoming an elephant, Gajendra got artha and kama. Then, when danger came – the *graaha* (crocodile) caught his foot – Bhagwan came and saved him.

The life of the graaha also had a background. A Mahatma went to bathe in the river. The graaha was a handsome Gandharva in his previous life. He was

frolicking in the river when the Mahatma came to bathe. On a mischievous impulse, the Gandharva went underwater and pulled at the Mahatma's foot. The Mahatma saw him and said, 'You are behaving like a graaha – become a graaha! You enjoy pulling people's feet when they are bathing. You will get enough scope for this when you become a graaha! Let your desire for this activity be fulfilled.'

At the time of death Gajendra remembered Bhagwan and Bhagwan saved him.

Bhagwan saves a person who has Gnan.

Bhagwan saves a person who does puja.

Bhagwan saves a person who does stuti.

Bhagwan saves a person who chants His name.

Four chapters describe how the four Purusharthas – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha – are obtained by Bhagwan's bhajan.

Samudra Manthan.

The next ten chapters have a description of *daana* (giving in charity). It is Bhagwan who has given all things to all beings. So, a manushya should not think that they belong to him.

The Kaustubh Mani (a jewel) on Vishnu Bhagwan's chest is also *eeshvareeya* (the Ishwara's). So are the *apsaraa* (celestial nymphs) and *visha* (poison) that arise during the Samudra Manthan. In creation, the importance of visha is not less than that of amrita. In some situations, visha also becomes amrita. Our Government exports snake venom in exchange of dollars. The poison of snakes gives dollars to our Nation. This is also a use of poison, isn't it?

Visha can sometimes do the work of amrita. In earlier times there was a treatment that entailed a sick person being bitten by a snake. This is described in some of the ancient books on Ayur Veda. Vaidyas (practitioners of Ayur Veda) used to breed snakes. The Bhavishya Purana describes several species of snakes, their color, markings, length, kind of venom, etc.

The purport is that nothing should be considered to be all bad. Visha also emerged during the Samudra Manthan, and *vaarunee* (wine) also came out of the ocean. So did a horse, elephant, vaidya, and Laxmiji. They all emerged during the churning of the ocean, and all of them are *ratna* (precious gems).

Ten chapters describe how Bhagwan gives everything that is needed for His Srishti. He gives the *kalpa-vriksha* (wish-fulfilling tree), *kaama-dhe`nu* (wish-fulfilling cow), vaidya, Kaustubh Mani, etc. They all emerge during the Samudra Manthan. If you take up the *mathaanee* (churning rod) of *vive`ka* (discriminate between the Satya and the asatya), and do the *manthana* (churning) of this *bhava-saagara* (sea of life) the Parameshwara will emerge like butter rising when buttermilk is churned. The Samudra Manthan is the same.

Vaman Avatar.

The story of Raja Bali is given in nine chapters after this. It is also a marvelous story. It contains Bhagwan's Vaman Avatar. Call Bhagwan. Say, 'Oh, Bhagwan! Come in a small form.' Don't think that you will get Brahmagnan on the very first day! Don't attempt the impossible. When Bhagwan comes as a Vaman (a small form) He becomes *trivikrama* (the Master of all three worlds – the nether world, this earth, and Swarga). Bhagwan manifests in a tiny form in the heart, like a drop, and becomes an ocean. He manifests as a grain and becomes a mountain. He manifests as a tiny vacuum and takes on the form of the *mahaakaasha* (space) or *chidaakaasha* (the all-pervading consciousness). So, never disdain Vaman Bhagwan!

The consciousness between Kashyap and Aditi is of great use in the life of humans. Kashyapji came to his wife and asked, 'Why are you sad?' He did not ask, 'Is it because you lack saris or jewelry? Is it because there is no food?' He did not ask these questions. What he asked was, 'Are you sad because an *atithi* (unexpected guest) came to your house and went away without eating anything?' A husband in present times is likely to have asked, 'Are you sad because you couldn't go shopping today?' Then, a wife of present times would have felt that her husband is concerned about her! In earlier times, a husband would ask, 'Did

any obstacle come when you were doing the puja of a Devta or an atithi, or the Ishwara? Or, in some *vrata* (self-imposed austerity,) or tapa?’

What am I to say about the people of the present times? When I tell them about Dharma, they like to hear that their desire will be fulfilled if they do a *vrata* I recommend. When a person does a *vrata*, one day’s food is saved. If I recommend a medicine and tell the person to fast for one day, he will agree. People have become predominantly inclined towards lobha, bhaya and krodha.

Vaman came to Aditi. What Bali gave to Vaman included the fruits of his Dharma, which is Swarga. He gave his *loka-paraloka* – this world over which he ruled, and the Swarga that was the fruit of the Dharma he had done. He offered them up to Bhagwan. This is what is meant by *naapanaa* (to measure).

The meaning of *trivikram* (three kinds of valor) is: to measure the *jaagrita*, *svapna*, *sushupti* – the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, and the three gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama.

Vikram (valor) here means *paada vinyaasa* – the orderly steps taken – *kramupaada vikshe`pe`* - the specific order of placing the feet. However, even after measuring Bali’s loka and paraloka, Bhagwan harassed Bali. Had He not done so, Bali’s ahankara would not have been destroyed. He would always have felt, ‘I gave something to Bhagwan.’ So, Bhagwan told Bali, ‘Your *pratignaa* (vow; pledge) is not complete yet.’ This is the Dharma of keeping one’s pledge.

Bali said, ‘All right, Maharaj, if my Dharma is yet to be completed, I will give You the third foot-length I promised.’

‘What do you have left to give?’ asked Bhagwan.

‘There is something left to be given:

Padam triteeyam kuru sheershim me` nijam.

(8. 22. 2)

Please place Your foot on my head. This will be the third foot-length.’

The *kaarana-shareera* (causal body) was measured, the ahankara was measured, the *parichhinnataa* (feeling of being a separate entity) was measured, and Bali became Bhagwan; Bhagwan became Bali! That means, Bali became the Master and Bhagwan became the servant. Bhagwan had to stand at Bali's gates as his gate-keeper!

This is the *saddharma* (the Dharma of adhering to the Satya by keeping one's word) – *svokti nirvaaha roopa dharma*.

It is essential that Dharma is accompanied by the Vedas. Dharma is not maintained by the predominance of an individual. An individual's order does not become Dharma. Dharma is the command of the *samashti gnaana* – the Gnan of the whole, of entirety. Veda means the samashti Gnan. An order by the President is not the law unless it is in keeping with the Constitution of the country. If it is against the country's Constitution, it is wrong. In this century, the Constitution is above both the Prime Minister and the President.

The thinking of Mahatmas in the ancient times was profound and all-encompassing. They would have thought that a *samhitaa* (collection of arranged verses) is necessary for the good of all. It is with the predominance of this Samhita that the story of Bhagwan's Matsya Avatar – when He manifested in the form of a fish – comes, at the end of the eighth canto. It is excellent!

In this, you are not to see who is giving what upadesha. Here, the people are caught in *anaadi avidyaa* (the deluded thinking that the world is real and eternal, which has no beginning). Individuality is troubled by vasanas. Bhagwan Veda, who is the swarup of the samashti Gnan, gives the upadesha. He is the true Guru. Everybody has to endure it.

There was a gentleman who was very vociferous in refuting the Panchadashi. The fact is, I have a clear memory of things that happened over thirty years ago, but I do not remember the more recent events. At that time I was about twenty five. I challenged him as to why he was vehemently opposed to the principles given in the Panchadashi. I had an urge to cajole him and convince him. I went to a

Mahatma and asked, 'This man is contradicting the Panchadashi. How can I convert his thinking?'

'How many people will you convince?' he asked. 'Madhva, Vallabh, Ramanuja, Raidas, Charandas, the Dadu Panthis, Kabir Panthis, and Radhaswami Panthis don't accept the Panchadashi either. Who all will you cajole and convince? If your buddhi accepts what the Panchadashi says, accept it. Do vivek accordingly and experience what is written in it, but give up the idea of convincing others, because it is not possible for everyone to accept everything. Furthermore, every principle has its own special quality.'

Four chapters in the eighth canto describe hoe *dharma-anushthaana* (rituals of Dharma) protect a person though four methods – Gnan, dhyana, puja and *praarthanaa* (prayers). Ten chapters describe the Samudra Manthan. Nine chapters give the story of Bali and Bhagwan Vaman. One chapter describes how the Matsya Avatar protects Veda Bhagwan. The eighth canto has a total of twenty four chapters.

The Ninth Canto.

The ninth canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat is wonderful! Just some days ago I had spoken on the ninth canto at length at the Prempuri Ashram. There is a method for reading this canto. It contains a description of the ten sons of Vaivasvat Manu. Each of the ten sons is a model of a division of Dharma. Just as Ministers head the different departments of the Government – and they are given the responsibility of that department – the ten sons of Manu are the heads of different departments of Dharma. Each has the *poornata* (wholeness) of that section, which is revealed in their name. The stories in other Puranas reveal some things, A person can discover them if he reads them attentively.

One son was Kavi. He became *vairagya* (having *vairagya*) since he was born. He was the head of the department of *vairagya*. He did not observe the Grihastha Ashram or the Vanaprastha Ashram. He had *vairagya* since his birth and he obtained Tattvagnan. He became a Mahatma.

In villages the first grains of a new crop are given to Brahmins. Similarly, Manu gave one of his ten sons for fulfilling the Virakta-Dharma (the Dharma of a Monk), and made him an *avadhoota* (a monk with no possessions). This is also a Dharma. If no ideal of renunciation remains in this world – if people get fully convinced that sukha is obtained only from bhoga, accumulation and karmas – there will be no one left in this world to uplift them.

Look, my brother, we have a good laugh sometimes, when we Sadhus get together. We talk about the dukha in the homes of the Grihasthas. ‘Bhagwan saved us!’ we say. Even people who are wise and resolute become agitated when dukha is caused by their wife, son, or wealth.

When you see people drive past in a luxurious car you think they are very sukhi. However, when they sometimes open their heart and talk about their dukha, we realize how many problems they have. They cannot say anything against their mother, wife or son. They suffer silently. They do things that are wrong and are distressed by remorse and regret. This is their mental state. So, under the

circumstances, if there was no ideal of renunciation in this world, the world of renunciation would disappear altogether.

The life of the second son is also remarkable. He was sent to serve his Guruji. He was wrongly accused of killing a cow. 'You are banished from our caste,' he was told. This is not about an ordinary boy; it is about the son of Raja Manu! The boy folded his hands before Bhagwan. 'Oh, You have done a great kripa on me by saving me from the Kingdom and all its riches!' he said. He had been insulted and disdained, and falsely accused, but he turned the situation to his advantage. He could see the Grace of Bhagwan in being saved from the sansara.

I will also tell you the story of the third son. His brothers did not give him his share of the father's wealth. They divided it among themselves. When this boy came home after completing his studies, he asked, 'Where is my share?' The other brothers told him, 'Our old father is your share. Take him and look after him.' The boy agreed. The benefit of having an elder is the good advice he can give.

The father said, 'Look, a Yagna is being held. Go there. The Brahmins will make a mistake while chanting the mantras. I know that they do not know the mantras. When you tell them the correct mantras the Brahmins, and the person who is getting the Yagna done will be pleased with you. They will give you many things.'

The boy went there. He was able to help the Brahmins conduct the Yagna successfully as predicted by his father. The Brahmins told him, 'Take all the things that are left over from the Yagna.' As he began to gather the things, Rudra (a form of Shankar Bhagwan) came and said, 'This is my portion. How can you take it?'

An obstacle arose. How was the dispute to be settled? That means, 'The person who's Yagna it was told me to take everything, and you say it is yours by right. How to decide who should take it?'

Rudra said, 'Go and ask your father.'

The boy went to his father. 'Yes, my son, it is the right of Rudra. Go and tell him that he is entitled to everything left over after the Yagna. Tell him that this is the

judgment given by your father, so he should please take everything. Tell him that you don't want anything.'

Rudra Devta was pleased. 'Your father has been just even at the cost of a loss for his son, and you came and spoke the truth about his decision. There is Dharma in your life. There is bhakti in your life. Become the *adhikaaree* (entitled person) of all this wealth,' he said. The boy became rich.

These are the different departments of Manu's sons.

1. To have vairagya since birth.
2. To consider a false accusation to be Bhagwan's anugraha.
3. To be committed to Satya and *nyaaya* (justice).

Then comes the story of Raja Ambarish, which is well known to all of you. It is an amazing story. I will definitely take you to the tenth canto tomorrow. Those who are anxious can relax. I will make divisions even in the tenth canto, describing the prema of the gopis – the milkmaids of Vrindavan, and the gopas – the cowherd boys, etc.

The Surya-Chandra Vanshas.

There are twenty four chapters in the ninth canto. Twelve, predominated by the Surya (sun) and twelve by the Chandrama (moon). The Avatar of Rama is dominant in the Surya vansha, and the Krishnavatar is dominant in the Chandra vansha. The Surya is considered to be dominated by *agni* (fire), *praana* (life sustaining energy) and the buddhi. The Chandrama is considered to be dominated by *soma* (the moon that spreads happiness; nectar), *priyataa* (being lovable), and the mana. Our ancient Shastras consider Soma to be the *adhide`vataa* (presiding deity) of the mana. Soma does not mean the moon we see in the sky; it is the *rasa* (sweetness) that pervades the whole world and manifests in the heart, in the form of priyata.

The ninth canto is split into two sections, dominated by the buddhi, Surya, and prana. The first twelve chapters are about removing dukha. The next twelve chapters are about obtaining sukha. Removing dukha is a separate thing and obtaining sukha is a separate thing, you know! There are substances that help a person to remove unhappiness or distress for a little while, but sukha cannot be obtained through them. It is like a man who shifts his load from his head to his shoulder for a while. The shifting gives some relief, but he does not become free of the load. Similarly, people suppress their buddhi for a little while to get a temporary relief from dukha, but they do not actually become free of dukha.

So, until Bhagwan's bhajan spreads happiness in the hriday, no ripples of anand spread in the mind, no showers of joy drench the consciousness, and no waves of anand sweep into your life. Once a person who does bhajan experiences this anand, he does not feel tempted by any worldly sukha.

Sukha is not in money. It is not in any other person or position. It is always in the mind. Sukha and dukha stay in the heart. The heart is the door and the window of both sukha and dukha. The only difference is that dukha is more dens, and sukha is more subtle. Dukha is present in two states – the waking state and the

dreaming state; whereas as sukha is present in all three states – the waking state, the dreaming state and the deep sleep state.

‘I feel very fresh. I had a sound sleep.’ When this natural state of deep sleep is achieved through the practice of Yoga, it becomes a Samadhi. The door of sukha opens in this state. The removal of dukha, and the obtaining of sukha, is explained in the ninth canto through the descriptions of Bhagwan’s *charitra* (character and life), the charitra of His bhaktas, Gnanis, those who serve the Gnanis and the followers of Gnanis, and the followers of Bhagwan.

Dukha is removed and sukha is obtained when a person has bhakti, practices Yoga, gets Gnan and listens to the charitra of the great. These are the methods for removing dukha and obtaining sukha.

There are many charitras in the ninth canto. Some of the names reveal the charitra of the person, while just a hint of some is given. These are given in greater detail in other Puranas.

Ambarish and Durvasa.

I will tell you of one or two charitras. Ambarish is known to be a bhagavat, but people rarely realize that Durvasa is also a bhagavat. People don’t reflect on the *parinaama* (outcome); they see things from the viewpoint of the misfortune of a bhakta.

Ambarish had a deep bhakti since his birth. His special quality was that he was completely engrossed in Bhagwan’s seva. He walked to the *teertha* (holy places), and did Bhagwan’s seva with his hands. He swept the floor of Bhagwan’s Mandir, did darshan of Bhagwan’s murti with his eyes, and listened to Bhagwan’s katha with his ears. He used his tongue to talk about Bhagwan and do His bhajan. His heart was filled with prema for Bhagwan. He used his buddhi to do chintan about Bhagwan.

A clerk loves his wife and son, and uses his buddhi for the benefit of his Seth. The Seth is his *aashraya* (refuge) and his prema is for his wife and son. Now, isn’t his life divided between the two? His wife gets displeased at times because he

comes home late from work, and at times his Seth is annoyed because he is detained at home and comes late for work. The man gets ground between his Seth and his wife.

Bhagwan, however, is such that He is our ashray and also the object of our prema. So, a person who takes refuge in Bhagwan, and has prema for Him, will become sukhi. However, a person who takes the ashray of Bhagwan but has prema for the sansara – or takes the ashray of the sansara and has prema for Bhagwan – gets a lot of dukha in his life. Therefore, the buddhi and the mana should both be attached to Bhagwan.

Mayye`va mana aaadhatsva mayi buddhim nive`shaya.

(Gita 12. 8)

(Establish your mana in Me and immerse your buddhi in Me.)

Our *kartritva* (what we feel we should do) and our *priyatva* (feeling of love) should both be inclined towards Bhagwan. Only then is a person's life happy.

I will tell you about Durvasa now. The fact is, Durvasa is not only a bhagavat, he is a *parama* (of the highest order) bhagavat! He is *shiva-ansha* (part of Shiva). The Shrimad Bhagwat states this clearly. There are a few people who know the quintessence of the Bhagwat-Dharma, and Shivaji is one of them. Durvasa is a part of Shivaji. He has no wish for *yash* (get a good name) or *pratishtaa* (prestige). He is always ready to blacken his name for the purpose of increasing Bhagwan's yash, and the yash of Bhagwan's bhaktas.

A person who is engrossed in enhancing his own image cannot enhance his Master's image. When a disciple becomes *siddha* (accomplished) he competes with his Guru. He indicates that his Guru is inferior to him in some respect. He says, 'Due to the influence of his time, Guruji had some social, political, or cultural lapses, which I have succeeded in overcoming. He had Gnan and I also have Gnan.' Or else, he says, 'Swamiji Maharaj has a very lofty Gnan. He knows the Brahman. However, he does not have a comprehensive grasp of politics. I have acquired Brahmagnan, but I also understand politics.'

So, see the viewpoint of Durvasa. Had he not come to Ambarish and created trouble, Ambarish's bhakti would not have shone so brightly. The world would never have known how much bhakti Ambarish had for Bhagwan.

The rule of the *e`kaadashi vrata* (fasting on the eleventh day of the lunar calendar) is to fast on the eleventh day and eat on the twelfth day of the lunar calendar. Raja Ambarish did this vrata for one year. Durvasa came with his disciples just as Ambarish was about to do *paarana* (conclude the fast by eating something). He came as an *atithi* (uninvited guest) Ambarish invited him to take food. Durvasa said he would eat after having a bath in the Yamuna, and went off with his disciples.

Durvasa put his head under the water and went into a Samadhi. Ambarish waited for him. It is not right to invite a Brahmin for a meal and eat before he is fed. It is also not right to not to paran at the right time. What Ambarish did was absolutely in keeping with the Shastras. He did not eat anything; he did the paran by swallowing Bhagwan's *charanaamrita* (the water with which the feet of Bhagwan's image have been washed is compared to amrita).

Shatam naashitam cha tat.

(It was eating and yet not eating.)

The paran was fulfilled by taking Bhagwan's charanamrita, and the dosha of eating without feeding was avoided. Durvasa, however, took affront. His anger was absolutely unjustified. He dispatched *krityaa* (a demoness who kills) at Ambarish. Had he not done this how would people have known how Bhagwan protects His bhaktas? How would they have known that Bhagwan had kept His Chakra (divine discus) for Ambarish's protection?

Bhagwan's terrible Chakra always stayed with Ambarish to protect him. It flew towards Durvasaji. Durvasaji went to Brahma, 'Save me!' Brahma said, 'Ambarish took a little water at the advice of the Brahmins. What dosha did he do?' Brahmaji always favors the Brahmins. Durvasaji went to Vishnu Bhagwan. He said, 'Not Mine, but My bhakta's glory should spread.'

*Aham bhaktaparaadheeno hyasvatantra iva dvija,
saadhubhirgrastahridayo bhaktairbhaktajanapriyah.*

Naahamaatmaanamaashaase` madbhaktaih saadhubhervinaa.

(9. 4. 63-64)

Durvasaji, I am supremely independent, but I am the slave of My bhaktas. *Aham bhakta-paraadheenah hyasvatantra dvija iva* – I am not My own Master, because the Sadhu bhaktas have captured My hriday. They have enthralled Me. My heart is in the hands of the Sadhus.

Naahamaatmaanamaashaase` madbhaktaih saadhubhervinaa.

I cannot remain alive without My bhakta Sadhus.

*Saadhavo hridayam mahyam saadhoonaam hridayam tvaham,
madanyat te` na jaananti naaham te`bhyo manaagapi.*

(9. 4. 68)

The Sadhu is My hriday; I am the hriday of the Sadhu. They don't know anything except Me – *naaham te`bhyo manaagapi.*

Ultimately, Durvasa came and fell at Ambarish's feet. Please observe how Bhagwan protects His bhaktas, and how *nishthaavaana* (full of staunch faith) Ambarish was. He had not eaten for one year. He had gone through twenty four ekadashis, waiting until Durvasa came back. Ambarish then did the stuti of the Chakra to quiet its anger. Ambarish saved Durvasaji's life. Durvasaji started to sing Ambarish's praises. He showed himself as cruel, and Bhagwan as compassionate.

Generally, when we see the shaap given by Durvasa we see that every shaap of his results in enhancing Bhagwan's glory. There are a number of such incidents even in the Mahabharata, in which Durvasa gave a shaap, but the person who was given the shaap got *mangala* (spiritual good fortune) and Bhagwan's compassion manifested.

The shaap to Indra resulted in the Samudra Manthan, and the amrita emerging. Durvasa made Shri Krishna smear *Jhoothee* (rendered impure by touching to the mouth) *kheera* (a milky rice pudding) all over His body, to show how much bhakti Shri Krishna had for Brahmins.

Durvasa is a bhagavat and Ambarish is also a bhagavat. The ninth canto has a number of episodes where both sides are shown to be bhagavats. The charitras are described from this viewpoint.

The formula for understanding the ninth canto is that Rama was born in the Surya Vansha, which is the vansha of Vaivasvat Manu and Vivasvan. It describes the great qualities of Rama's ancestors. Someone gets Mukti in two *ghadee* (forty eight minutes), someone brings Gangaji to the earth, some dig the sea, someone pleases Kapil Bhagwan, and somebody is skilled in the practice of Yoga. In the same way, the charitra of Ramachandra also removes dukha.

It is shown in Ramachandra's charitra that if even the Ishwara has *aasakti* (worldly attachments) for someone, He will have to be dukhi. I am telling you this purposely, since it is stated in the Bhagwat.

Yesterday a gentleman came to meet me. I told him that it is the *pratignaa* (pledge) of Mullinathji – the famous commentator of Raghuvansha and other poems – *naamoolam likhyate` kinchit naanape`kshitamuchyate`* - everything I write is given in the original Bhagwat.'

The shloka in the Bhagwat is:

*Streepunprasanga e`taadrik sarvatra traasamaavahah,
apeeshvaraanaam kimuta graamyasya grihache`tasah.*

(9. 11. 17)

The aasakti between a woman and a man is such that a woman suffers a yearning for a man and a man suffers a yearning for a woman. They suffer if either meets some other – a doubt crops up in the mind at once.

If you meet an *avaidika* (someone who does not accept the principle of the Vedas), he will create *asambhaavanaa* (a feeling of impossibility; a doubt) in your heart. Do you know what the *asambhavana* is? 'How can a jeeva be the Brahman? How can this be the purport of the Vedas? How can Mukti be attained by Gnan alone?' *Kusanga* (wrong company) creates doubts in the mind. This is its characteristic. It creates an unfavorable feeling, like, 'I am *parichhinna* (a separate being). I am *sansaaree* (of this interactive world). I am a jeeva.' Such inverse feelings are created by the *avaidik*.

The attachment between a husband and wife, and their having children, is not a dosha in the Grihastha Ashram (the life of a married householder); it is Dharma. There is no dosha in continuing the lineage.

Gandhiji used to say that dosha comes n when a couple thinks, 'Let us both eat first, then the others can eat or go hungry.'

So, *apeeshvaraanaam* – if even the Ishwara does aasakti He will have to face dukha.

Shri Rama.

Shri Ramachandra's charitra is outstanding. How can it be explained about how a father's command should be obeyed? How a man should behave with his mother, give respect to his step-mother, respect his Guru, live with his brothers, with his wife, how to behave with his people, with sons, and lead a life of Dharma? All this is shown in the charitra of Shri Rama. His life contains Satsang, going to holy places, Tattvagnan, and Bhagwan's worship. It has the *poornataa* (wholeness) that ought to be present in an ideal life.

See how useful this canto is for people.

Saubhari Rishi.

There is the charitra of Saubhari, which is also very interesting. Saubhari Rishi is mentioned twice in the ninth canto. He did tapasya on the bank of the Yamuna. He grew very fond of the fishes. This prema is also a peculiar thing.

*Naitaaroopam pareekshante`naasaam vayasi sansthitih,
suroopam vaa kuroopam vaa pumaan itye`va bhunjate`.*

Aasakti slides in somewhere or other, without examining ugliness or beauty or age.

Just as Ajamil's aasakti was for a wrong person, Saubhari Rishi's aasakti was for the fishes in the Yamuna. I ask the Vaishnavs who are present to pardon me for telling you this, but this story is given in the original Bhagwat. Vaishnavs are Bhagwan's *kripa-paatra* (recipients of kripa). We don't know whether these came from Bengal or Sindh; the land of their birth is not known. They would come to Vrindavan and offer *bhoga* (food offered to Bhagwan and then eaten as a blessing) of the fish from the Yamuna. This angered Saubhari Rishi. He said, 'Now onwards you will die if you come here.'

That means he stopped Bhagwan's bhaktas from going there. He disdained bhaktas in favor of the fishes. The fishes frolicked in the waters of the Yamuna. Saubhari Rishi would watch them frolic and mate. This had an impact on his chitta. He began to think, 'Life would be very happy if I had a wife and children.'

He went to Raja Mandhata. He got married there. Children were born. He became so engrossed in sensual pleasures that he was not even aware of the sun rising and setting. That means, he stopped doing the rituals of Sandhya Vandan and Agnihotra.

One day, he noticed that the sun was about to set. 'Let me go and do Sandhya Vandan,' he said. His wife began to laugh. 'Why are you laughing?' he asked. 'So many years have passed; the sun has risen and set thousands of times. You never did Sandhya Vandan. What is this sudden urge today?'

'Oh, is that so?' Saubhari Rishi was shocked to hear this. 'So many Sandhya Vandans not done! I have become *patita* (fallen)!' he thought. He left everything and became a *virakta* (a monk with no possessions) again.

*Sangam tyaje`ta mithunavratinaam mumukshuh sarvaatmanaa na visrije`d
bahirindriyaani,*

e`kashcharan rahasi chittamananta eeshe` yunjeeta tadvritishu saadhushu che`t prasangah.

(9. 6. 51)

A Yogi should not stay with even birds or animals during the mating season. It is better he stays alone and focuses his mind on Bhagwan, associates with Bhagwan's bhaktas, and Sadhus. The topic of their conversation should be Bhagwan.

Now, since bhaktas were stopped by Saubhari Rishi, Kaliya Nag (a deadly water serpent) came and settled there. He knew that Garudaji (the giant eagle who carries Vishnu Bhagwan) was not allowed to come there, so he would be safe. *Dushta* (wicked people) come where bhaktas are not present.

Jamadagni and Durvasa.

Jamadagni created an obstacle in a *bhagavat-sankalpa* (Bhagwan's resolve). When Sahasrabahu and others took away the Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow), Parashuram went and killed them. Parashuram's father, Jamadagni, was very displeased. 'What have you done? You are the son of a Brahmin, and you get angry? You should have done *kshamaa* (shown forgiveness) or gone into a Samadhi. You should remain *shaanta* (tranquil). You should go for a *teertha yaatraa* (a journey to holy places) to atone.'

'Very well, father, I will obey you.' Parashuram went to holy places and returned in due course. After this, Parashuram's mother, Renuka, went to fetch water one day. When she did not return for a long time, Jamadagni did dhyana. He saw his wife watching Chatraratha, the handsome Gandharva admiringly. Chitraratha was frolicking in the water with his wives. Anger welled up in Jamadagni. He had rebuked Parashuram for getting angry and killing the people when Kamadhenu was stolen. He had told his son that he was a Brahmin and should always remain tranquil and practice forgiveness. Renuka had only looked admiringly at Chatraratha. She came back filled with apprehension, knowing she had delayed.

Jamadagni was filled with anger. 'Kill her!' he told his sons. None of them obeyed him. He turned to Parashuram. 'Kill your mother and also your brothers,' he commanded. So, if the Ishwara gets angry with someone, join him. Don't side with the other person. The side of the Ishwara is very strong. Parashuram obeyed his father. He killed his mother and his brothers. Jamadagni was very pleased. 'My son, ask for a vara,' he said.

'Let them all come alive again, and let them not remember that I killed them,' said Parashuram. Then he smiled and asked, 'Father, krodha or kshama?'

Look; a person who finds dosha in Bhagwan's *kriyaa* (actions) himself becomes a *doshi* (offender). On such occasions, Bhagwan sometimes gives His protection. One should be grateful, and accept it, and see the hidden purpose behind it.

Among the *saamarthyavaana* (people with great capabilities) is Raja Bharat, and among the *dhairyaavaana* (people with great fortitude) is Raja Rantidev. I had told you about him earlier. He went without food for forty eight days – this was the kind of fortitude he had. Do you think there was no money in the Royal Treasury? Do you think that the people did not eat? Rantidev believed that the money raised by taxes and fines belonged to the people; it was not for his personal use. Ultimately, he prayed to Bhagwan, 'My Atma is *tripta* (fully satisfied) by the water I gave to the butcher. Now, You please do this kripa on me that I sit in everybody's heart.'

Earlier, we would read:

Ne tvaham kaamaye` raajyam na svarga na punarbhavam,

kaamaya dukha taptaanaam praaneenaam aartinaashanam.

'I want neither the Kingdom, nor Swarga, nor Moksha. I want that nobody in this world should be dukhi.'

There was a Mahatma who told me, 'If I meet Bhagwan, I will ask for this; nobody should get dukha.'

Someone said, 'My brother, everybody has an antahkarana, his own karmas, and his own sanskaras. They have to suffer dukha accordingly.'

In the same way, Rantidev said:

*Na kaamaye`aham gatimeeshvaraata paraamashtarddhiyuktaamapunarbhavam
vaa,*

asarti prapadye`akhilade`habhaajaamantahsthitoya`na bhavantyadukhaah.

(9. 21. 12)

'I wish to sit in the hearts of all.'

Bhagwan is already seated in the hearts of all; what will you do there?

'Yes, Bhagwan abides in all hearts, but He does not take anybody's dukha. He remains *asanga* (aloof; unattached), *nirlipta* (unaffected); a *saakshee* (witness). I want to sit in hearts of all beings, and take their dukha. Let the dukha of all the beings in the world come to me. Let all be free of dukha.'

Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh manifested before Rantidev. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh are present in every *brahmaanda* (universal system). Just as there is a jeeva in every shareer, these three are separate in every brahmanda. And, millions of brahmandas revolve in the *kaaranaarnava* (the causal sea of Creation). A person who becomes one with the Paramatma, with that Parameshwara who manifests as Brahma-Vishnu-Mahesh – obtains all three of them.

So Bharat, the personification of capability, and Rantidev, the personification of fortitude, are bhagavats. They are Bhagwan's bhaktas. The vanshas in which Bhagwan decides to take birth have personalities like Yadu and Yayati, who are *divya* (having divine qualities).

These stories are given in twenty four chapters; twelve of the Surya Vansha and twelve of the Chandra Vansha. The chapters are divided equally to show that the Chandra Vansha is in no way inferior to the Surya Vansha.

According to the Shastras the aradhana of the Chandrama (moon) is mainly for the ladies, and the aradhana of the Surya (sun) is mainly for the men folk. In the Vedic Sanskriti the *purusha-dharma* (Dharma for men) is the upasana of the Surya – *dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat* (part of the Gayatri Mantra) – for absorbing buddhi from Surya Devta. And, the upasana of Chandrama is prescribed for the women folk mainly. To give *arghya* (offer water), and do a vrata of the Chandrama, is rarely prescribed for men; it is mainly for the ladies.

This means, according to the Vedic viewpoint, the *stree shareera* (female form) is *soma-pradhaana* (predominantly inclined towards Soma Devta), and the *purusha shareera* (male form) is predominantly inclined towards the *saurya-shakti* – the power of the intellect.

Buddhi is predominant in the Dharma for men, whereas the mana is predominant in the Dharma for women. There is more prema in a woman, and men have a greater capacity for *vichaara* (objective profound analysis).

If you say that men and women are equal in law, it is correct. However, if someone were to say that if both have equal rights, the men should also have babies! This is against the law of Prakriti (Nature). Prakriti has created the male and the female forms for different purposes. One shareer gets *garbhaadhaana* (impregnated), the other doesn't. One shareer has a growth of a moustache and beard, the other doesn't. There is a difference in the organs.

In the same way, there is a difference in the emotional nature of men and women. To sit facing the sun for a long time, chanting Vedic Mantras in high and low notes, goes contrary to the essential nature of women. A different kind of sonorousness is needed for chanting the Vedas and a different kind for music. So, don't spoil your voice; use it in the right way. To sit before the sacred fire and do agnihotra is different from sitting before the fire to do cooking. The actions of women should be according to the Soma shakti, and the actions of men should be according to the Saurya shakti.

Tyaagapradhaanah purushadharmah tapah pradhaanaa naarayah.

(The purush Dharma is predominated by tyaga, and the stree Dharma is predominated by tapa.)

The male form is *tyaga-pradhaana* (strongly inclined to giving up). It has *veerya-ksharana* (dropping of the semen) – it is created for tyaga. The female form, however, is not tyaga pradhan. If you see, a *beeja* (seed) is created about all these things.

The ninth canto contains a story of a *straina purusha* (a man enslaved by his wife). The husband and wife lived with great prema, but they had no children. The husband went to war. He conquered the other king and took his daughter onto his chariot when he returned home. When his wife saw the princess on her husband's chariot she exclaimed, 'Oh! You deceiver! Who is the woman you have seated on the seat that is mine?' The man was such a bhakta of his wife that he folded his hands and said, 'This is your daughter-in-law.'

'I have no son! How can there be a daughter-in-law?'

'When you get a son we will get this girl married to him.'

The Devtas said, 'Of all the stree bhaktas we have ever seen, none of them can match this one! This man gets the first place on the list of stree-bhaktas!' The name of this King was Nabhag. He did not get a son. A girl was brought for him to marry. The Devtas blessed him with a son. The son was married to the princess Nabhag had brought on his chariot.

Shri Krishna was born in the Yadu Vansha. Yayati did great bhoga, but he remained unsatisfied. Yayati's words are worth writing in golden letters.

Na jaatu kaamah kaamaanaam upabhoge`na shaamyati,

havishaa krishnavartme`va bhooya e`vaabhivardhate`.

(9. 19. 14)

If anyone wants to satisfy his urge for bhoga through bhoga, he is on the wrong track. This is the path to ruin. If you give free rein to your hands, feet, tongue, nose, ears, etc they will always ask for more, and take you to your destruction.

They will become *jada* (inert). If you keep them under your control you will see that you are the form of pure consciousness, separate from the indriyas.

Kaama-vaasanaa (lust) is not satiated by bhoga. It is like agni flaring up when oblations are poured into it. Lust increases when you try to satisfy it. This point should be kept in mind.

Yat prithivyaam vreehiyavam hiranyam pashavah striyah,

na duhyanti manahpreetim punsah kaamahatasya te`.

(9. 19. 13)

Will you be satisfied if you get all the bhoga in the world? You will always want more, no matter how much you get. A gentleman said that he would go and live in a teerth if he got twenty thousand rupees. This was in nineteen thirty four. Then he got twenty lacks. I do not say that he has made twenty crores, but he certainly has some five or ten crores now. Yet he says, 'Let me make a little more money.' The thirst for more does not get quenched. There is no end to 'a little more'. If you have *santosha* (contentment) you can be happy with a simple meal, but if you allow *asantosha* (dissatisfaction) into your heart, you will not be satisfied even if you are given the three *loka* (worlds). The fact is Bhagwan is born in the vansha of santosh.

Sadasaspatayoapye`te` hyasantoshaat patantyaghah.

If the sadasaspati – the Chairman – of Brahmaji's assembly is discontented, he will also fall from his lofty position.

Look; *apoornataa* (being incomplete) comes after *poornataa* (being complete), when accumulation reaches a peak, reduction is bound to begin. So, develop your jeevan, your mana, and your buddhi. Bring *sadguna* (good tendencies) into your life.

The Tenth Canto.

Shri Krishna Charit – a reflection.

At the beginning of the tenth canto Raja Parikshit asked Shukadevji to describe Shri Krishna's charitra. The question itself contains a beautiful point.

*Nivrittataashairupageeyamaanaad bhavaushadhaachchhrotramanoabhiraamaat,
ka uttamashlokagunaanuvadaat pumaan virajye`ta vinaa pashugnaat.*

(10. 1. 4)

What is Bhagwan's charitra like?

Bhagwan's charit is a *rasaayana* (medical compound). The rasayan should be written by a good vaidya. If the vaidya prescribes a medicine with the intention of making money from the patient – if the vaidya is greedy – there will be some doubt about the medicine being the most appropriate for the illness. 'Nivrittataashai-rupageeyamaanaad' – the Mahapurusha, who have no greed for worldly objects, have sung about this. The meaning of this is that this medicine is not kept hidden. There are many vaidyas who refuse to reveal what their medicine is composed of. Here, two points are given about the one who gives this medicine:

1. *Nirlobha* – without greed.
2. *Upageeyamaana* – one who reveals the treatment.

Look; there is the Yamuna and the sandy beach of the bank. There is a *kalpavriksha* (wish-fulfilling tree), a gem-studded seat. Shri Krishna stands in a *tribhanga lalita* (beautiful posture, bent in three places) position. His beautiful yellow stole flutters in the gentle breeze. He has a flute in His hands. His form is radiant, blue-hued. His eyes are filled with love. Grace showers from His eyebrows as He stands there. Do His darshan once! This is the medicine for your dukha. It is a root mantra for awakening prema for Shri Krishna in your heart.

Bhavoushadhaat shrotramanoabhiraamaat,

ka uttamashloka gunaanuvaadaat,
pumaan nirajye`ta vinaa pashughnaat.

Which is the human being who won't find this enticing? If there is any dukha at your home, you will have forgotten it for a moment. Look back and see; didn't you forget your worries for a moment? You forgot your illness, you forgot your dukha, you forgot your strife, you forgot your poverty. For one moment, the scene before your mind's eye could make you forget your dukha and wallow in a sea of sukha. You can retain this for five minutes or five hours. This is an *uttama* (most superior) *gunaanuvaada* (discussion of virtues). The people who don't have prema for this are *aatmaghaatee* (self-destructive). They keep their own sukha away from themselves.

This is shraddha.

Whose shraddha?

It is the shraddha of the *shrotaa* (listener).

Now, see the shraddha of the *vaktaa* (speaker).

Vaasude`vakathaaprashnah purushaanstreen punaati hi,
vaktaaram prichchhakam shrotrimstatpaadasalilam yathaa.

(10. 1. 16)

The purpose of this katha is to wash away the vasana for paapa that is in your hriday. There is no argument in the world that can quiet this urge for doing paapa. This katha is the method for arousing the latent rasa in your heart, for awakening the sleeping Bhagwan in your heart, for lighting up the sparkling blue gen, Shri Krishna, hidden in the darkness of your *hridayaakaasha* – the space in your heart.

Kalikalmashaghna – it is written in the Shrimad Bhagwat that there is *kali-kalmasha* – a dark stain of paapa in your heart. The only method by which this stain can be removed is the amrita of Bhagwan's katha.

Please don't take this amiss: you use many words without understanding their meaning. How can you be benefited by the use of a word you don't understand? Awaken the vritti of prema and attach it to Bhagwan.

I am telling you about our Mahatmas. The opinion of the Mahatmas is that people who wish to bring Bhagwan into their hriday on the strength of *pratyaksha* (direct observation) will never succeed in bringing Him into their heart.

Very well; can anyone bring Bhagwan into their hriday through *anumaana pramaana* (proved through inference?)? There can be no inference without direct observation. Furthermore, the result of inference is also observed directly. Therefore, those who want to bring Bhagwan into their hriday on the strength of anumana will never succeed.

There is one method for bringing Bhagwan into your hriday – listen to discourses about the Ishwara. Apart from this, there is no other method for removing the sansara that fills your mind. It is not that you can meet Him only in solitude. You can meet Him in a large crowd. It is not that the Ishwara is ashamed to come before people; that He will come to you only when you are alone. The Ishwara is not so shy!

Come; let me tell you this: it is accepted in Vedanta that the Paramatma is the form of the *adhishtaana* (substratum) of the buddhi. Once the form of the Ishwara comes into the buddhi – meaning, once the buddhi becomes *brahmaakara* – avidya is destroyed. Then, the Paramatma is revealed in the buddhi in His self-effulgent form.

What is Avatar? The Ishwara's coming into Vasudevji's mana is His Avatar. His coming into Devki's mana is His Avatar. *Sattvam vishuddham vasude`vashabditam* – it is written in the fourth canto that Vasudev means a shuddha antahkarana, and Devki means the buddhi that absorbs the Ishwara – the Ishwara-akara vritti.

The *anavatarana* (not descending) Ishwara cannot subdue the disturbances in our chitta. The *avateerna* (one who descends) Ishwara comes into the buddhi-vritti and destroys our dukha. He does not destroy our dukha without manifesting into the inclination of our intellect. Shri Krishna kills Putana only by taking an Avatar.

He kills Kansa – that too, without using any weapon. You all would be aware of this special quality of our Thakurji of Vrindavan.

I have heard that when the English first came to Calcutta they said, ‘We have heard that Hindus have many Ishwaras. Tell us who they are.’ They had no knowledge that if the Ishwara is considered to be *niraakaara* (without form) He will become separate from the *saakaara* (with form). And, if only one form is accepted in the sakara, all His other forms will become devoid of the Ishwara.

So, in order to catch the one in the many we use five forms, seven forms, ten forms. He has *kundala* (ear rings), *haara* (necklace), *kangana* (bangles). Many forms are needed to make a person recognize the primary element. Ornaments have different names but the gold in them is one. If many forms are presented, and a person is told that they are all gold, the person will also be able to recognize that the *aakaara nirape`ksha* (regardless of the form) Ishwara is in all, just like the gold in all the ornaments. The purpose of showing the Ishwara’s many forms is to show the one in the many.

Someone brought a picture of Shiva. ‘Why is he holding a trident?’ asked the English. They were told it was for killing the wicked. ‘Very well; wicked people are against this Ishwara.’

Someone brought a picture of Vishnu Bhagwan. ‘Why is he holding a Chakra?’ they asked. They were told it was for protecting his bhaktas. ‘Very well; this God must have a lot to worry about.’

Someone brought a picture of Shri Krishna with a flute. ‘This Ishwara is free of worries,’ said the English. ‘He enjoys playing the flute. He is happy. A person who is happy plays music. How will a person who always holds a stick be in a state of anand?’ They declared that the best God was the one who played the flute!

This Ishwara sucks Putana with His lips. He touches Shatakasura with His foot and turns the jada into chetan. He catches hold of Trinavarta’s neck and changes him from an Asura to a Devta. He uproots the two trees and makes them into Devtas and listens to their stuti. This Shri Krishna is such a delightful Ishwara that He draws our eyes and our mana and our buddhi towards Himself.

One person went to attach his mana to the *shoonya* (vacuum) Ishwara. He lost this world, and the shoonya did not come into his mana. And, Shri Krishna is such that He, Himself, comes first, meets us, and then frees us from others.

I am not talking only about the *leelaa* (frolic; play) about Putana and Shatakasura; I am also talking about Devki, Vasudev, Yashoda, Nanda, the *gwaala baala* (Krishna's friends, the cowherd boys), *gopee* (the milk maidens) and all those who had prema for Shri Krishna. I am talking about how Shri Krishna manifested in their prema and danced – taa-taa-thai; taa-taa-thai – Krishna danced in their eyes, He danced in their mana, in their ears, skin, tongue, and nose! This leela of the tenth canto is filled with paramananda!

Anganaamananaa mantare`maadhavo

maadhavamaadhavam chaantare`naanganaah,

itthamaakalpate`mandale`madhyagaah

sanyagau ve`nuna de`vakinandanad.

(Bhagwan Madhav dancing between two gopis, gopis between two Madhavas, and Madhav – the son of Devki – standing in the centre of the circle of dancers, playing His flute, during the Raas Leela.)

People who don't want to obtain the anand by making their vritti take the form of Shri Krishna are deprived of this anand. This is the root of vairagya. When a person gets rasa from one source, the other sources of rasa fade away. And, where rasa does not arise for the divine, there is no vairagya. Those who hate vairagya try to keep away from Krishna. Krishna is the primary Devta of vairagya. Attach yourself to one, have prema for one, and see how He pulls your mana towards Himself, away from the others.

For the next three or four days I will tell you about Shri Krishna's charitra and upadesh.

The fact that Vasudev and Devki are both bhagavat is evident at the very start of Shri Krishna's leela. Bhagwan chose Devki to be His mother and Vasudev to be His father. When Bhagwan chooses someone, all the *guna* (good tendencies) automatically come into that person.

It is said in the Shatras that a person's life is wasted if he does not get Bhagwan's darshan; or, the life of a person on whom Bhagwan has not rested His eyes is wasted.

What is the method here?

Kansa was committing atrocities on Devki and Vasudev. He caught the plait of his sister, Devki, on her wedding day. Her plait was in his left hand and in his right hand was a sword – to cut her throat! His affection turned into hatred as soon as he heard the *aakaashavaanee* (celestial voice) say that Devki's eight child would be Kansa's death. This was as he was leading the chariot of the bridal couple on the road. However, no anger arose in either Devki or in Vasudev. This is incredible! In the Manav-Dharma it is said that in such a situation the attacker should be killed.

Aatataayinamaayaantam hanyaade`vaavichaarayan,

gurum vaa baalavridhdau vaa braahmanam vaa bahushrutam,

naatataayivadhe` dosho bhagavaan manurabraveet.

Bhagavan Manu has said that there is no dosha in killing an *aatataayi* (one who attacks to kill). However, it is not necessary to let the mana go, for Bhagwan to manifest. When a person lets go of the mana, it merges into the *pancha-bhoota* (the five elements), and becomes a gross object. It becomes unrestrained.

But when the mana is raised above the *pancha-bhootas*, above the *de`ha* (body), the *bhagavat-sattaa* (existence of Bhagwan) manifests in it. Vasudev is the shuddha antahkarana and Devki is the receptacle of buddhi.

Vasudevji tried to convince Kansa in many ways, using the four prescribed methods of *saama-daama-danda-bhe`da* (convincing-bribing-threatening-using the divide and rule tactic), but Kansa was adamant. Kansa means a person who separates. ‘*Kasi hinsaayaam*’ – *kansati* – ‘*hinasti iti kansaa*’ – one who shows arrogance, is violent, deprives others, etc. Have you ever noticed this characteristic of *abhimaana* (pride; arrogance) or not? A person who keeps others at a lower level is an *abhimaani* (one who has abhiman). ‘This person is my inferior. I am superior to him.’

And, a person who keeps others greater, or at a higher level, is also an abhimani. Abhiman is destroyed when no other remains, meaning, the person considers all as his own Atma.

The Vaishnavas say, ‘Make your abhiman so tiny that antahkarana cannot bind it. Make it so miniscule that it slips out of any knot of the antahkarana’. An extraordinary method is accepted here.

Devki-Vasudev won over Kansa. Vasudev’s counseling Kansa is given in the original Bhagwat. Vasudev’s thinking is lofty and magnanimous. Bhagwan comes into Vasudev’s mana, and from there He comes into Devki’s mana. This is called *maanasee deeksha* (mental initiation). Then Bhagwan comes into Devki’s womb and manifests in Mathura. From there He goes to Gokul.

The significance in this is the *priyataa* (quality of being lovable) of the Parabrahma Paramatma in the *manas* (emotional mind), and the *tadaakaara vritti* (inclination of identifying with Him) through the buddhi, and the process of Bhagwan manifesting in a gross human form in the world. The entire srishti becomes *bhagavatee* (a form of Bhagwan). This is His being taken to Gokul. To bring into the buddhi that, which is beyond the scope of the buddhi, and to bring it from the buddhi to the eyes, and from the eyes make it pervade the whole world!

This is the symbolic description of the method of making the whole word *divya* (divine), as some people say. Think about it and see.

Bhagwan is the *aashraya* (refuge) of the buddhi. For Him to take on a form, and appear before the indriyas, is His going to Gokul. Gokula means the *kula* (family,

group) of the indriyas. *Gavaam+kulam = gokulam*, such aphorisms are also given in the Rig Veda. Shri Vallabh Acharyaji Maharaj held on to this as the principle significance. Later, Madhusudan Ojha – the renowned scholar of Jaipur – elaborated on it. Yogi Arvind accepted this method of the Bhagwat to show how the whole world can be experienced as a form of the Paramatma.

Bhagwan manifesting through Devki-Vasudev, His going to Gokul and playing like a child, is to make Bhagwan the object of the indriyas so that we can laugh with Him, play with Him, eat with Him, sleep with Him, etc. This is the *saadhaaraneekarana* (bringing the Ishwara to the level of ordinary humans), and it is done through bhakti. The rasa-swarup of the Atmadev manifests in the world by this method.

I will take you into Gokul now.

In Mathura, Devki and Vasudev are bhagavats. And here, Brahma, Shiva, and Prithivi are bhagavats. The Devtas went to the shores of the *ksheerasaagara* (the ocean of milk where Bhagwan reclines on the coiled serpent Anant) because they were tortured by Kansa. The ksheersagar is a sea of *saattvikataa* (the qualities of Sattva guna). It is pure white. This is where Bhagwan remains hidden.

Brahma is of the Raja guna vritti, and Shiva of the Tama guna vritti. Indra and the other Devtas are of mixed vrittis. They all become *sattvamukhi* (turned towards Sattva guna). Only then could they hear Bhagwan's vani, 'I will accept an Avatar.'

Brahma and other Devtas did Bhagwan's stuti when He was in Devki's womb. And, all of you know that six have to die before Bhagwan appears. Bhagwan cannot be experienced until the six die. Further on, the Bhagwat describes that the *aasuree* (demoniac) feelings came, and were destroyed. Then *she'sha* (the serpent Anant, who came as Shri Krishna's elder brother Balarama). Bhagwan sent His Maya – who is the form of Prakriti – first. Then He manifested.

In this manifestation, I wish to draw your attention to the difference in the sansara of Bhagwan's bhakti (the worship of the all-powerful Ishwara), and *bhagvat-bhakti* (bhakti for a personal Bhagwan with whom His premis have a relationship).

The *gaurav-moolaka* (based on Bhagwan's greatness) bhakti is seen everywhere. It is to know the grandeur of Bhagwan, and worship Him. He is *niraakaara* (without form, beyond all *aakaara* (forms)). The meaning of nirakara is to be beyond all shapes and forms.

Aakaare`bhyo nishkraantah niraakaarah.

The grammatical analysis of nirakara is – '*aakaare`bhyo nishkraantah – niraadayah kraantaadabharthe` panchamyaam*' – just as the gold in bangles, necklace, ear rings, etc is separate from the shapes, the Parameshwara abides in all beings, but is separate from them.

When we say *sarvavyaapee* (all-pervading) it means that Bhagwan is in all places, but beyond them. When we say He is *avinashee* (indestructible; eternal) it means that He is in all *kaala* (time), but beyond kaala. He is present in every moment, but beyond all moments. He is in every inch of the earth, and in all space, but beyond everything.

The Ishwara is the *sanchaalaka* (manager) of all, the *pitaa* (father) of all, the *maalika* (Master) of all, the *svaamee* (lord) of all, the Ishwara who is the Ishwara of all. This is the aradhana that is practiced everywhere.

The aradhana of Vraja (the area around Vrindavan) is not the aradhana of the gaurav-moolak Ishwara. This aradhana is prema-moolak and *sambandha-moolaka* (based on relationship). Prema is something separate, sambandh is something separate, and the feeling of gaurav is something separate.

In Vraja there are three main *bhaava* (feelings). Please do not see them from the viewpoint of the Tattva; see them from the viewpoint of individual feeling. Attach the prema in your mana to Bhagwan, and then do vichar.

Five principal vrittis are accepted in Vraja.

1. Atma bhava, or Shanta rasa.
2. Dasya bhava.
3. Sakhya bhava.
4. Vatsalya bhava.

5. Madhur or Shringar bhava.

Atma bhava – the Shanta Rasa – is to withdraw the vrittis from everything and see Bhagwan in your hriday. If you feel like it, you can see it sometime; that is why I am telling you about it.

In your body, in your hriday, there is a small *aavakaasha* (empty space). You can understand it to be an empty space where both light and darkness come. Your breath moves in it. This is your *hridaya aakaasha* – the space in your heart. It is glimmering, filled with light. In it there is neither *shoka* (sorrow) nor *moha* (delusion). You are to just observe it. *Vishoka vaa jyotishmati* (effulgence without sorrow). Amazing scenes will appear in it. They will appear and disappear. And, the *bhootaakaasha* (space within the body) will become the *chidaakaasha* (space filled with pure consciousness).

Then, another bhava will come, in which you can do Bhagwan's darshan. If you do the darshan of a Shivalinga your *monovritti* (mental inclinations; thoughts) will immediately be quieted. There is a huge, effulgent Shivalinga, white like camphor or fresh snow. Do dhyana of this. All your *dukha-daardrya* (sorrow-poverty) will be removed. This is the method for quieting a restless mind.

However, if there is a feeling of *heenataa* (being impoverished or inadequate) in you, do the dhyana of the *antaryaamee* (Bhagwan who abides in the heart) Ishwara who controls the whole world. This is the Dasya bhava – the feeling that you are Bhagwan's servant.

If you have the feeling of being Bhagwan's friend, it is the Sakhya bhava. If you feel Bhagwan is older and you are younger, it is the Dasya bhava. If you and Bhagwan laugh and play together, He keeps His hand on your shoulder as you walk together, it is Sakhya bhava.

And if Bhagwan is your little child, it is a Vatsalya bhava – a strong maternal love. But if you feel Bhagwan is your dearest, most beloved, lover or husband, it is the Madhur bhava, the Shringar bhava.

So, whichever bhava is strongest in you, cultivate that relationship with Bhagwan. 'He is my Atma. He is my Swami. He is my sakha. He is my child. He is my Beloved.'

Attach your entire prema to Bhagwan. You will see that all the sorrows of the world will be cut away. Sorrow is always in the mana. If a person's mana is all right, there is no dukha in the world for him.

Dukha is not caused by a paucity of wealth. I have seen people who had no food for the morning meal and none for the night. Their clothes were tattered, but they were full of life. I have seen such people on the banks of Gangaji. I have seen such people in the villages – they were not depressed in spite of being very, very poor.

Nor is lack of good health a cause of dukha. There is a lady who lives in Vrindavan. She was travelling with her husband and son at night. The car hit a pillar. The driver and her husband were killed. The child was saved. The lady's body was broken in three places. She was kept in the hospital at Agra for one year. I had gone to visit her. A gentleman was sitting with her. She lay on the bed, smiling, as she talked to him. The gentleman asked her, 'You have done so much Satsang with Shri Udiya Babaji since your childhood. You have done so many *maalaa* (chanting using prayer beads), and so much bhajan. In spite of this you had to face this tragedy. Why didn't Bhagwan protect you?'

'The fruit of Satsang is not that I should be saved from misfortune,' she said. 'The fruit of Satsang is that in spite of such problems I am able to smile and talk to you. The body lies broken. I cannot get up, but I lie here and do Bhagwan's path. I do my mala. I fold my hands to Bhagwan and, and I feel as though nothing has happened.'

This strength to endure the greatest dukha with equanimity comes from Satsang. It gives the shakti to turn a situation of dukha into sukha. Satsang is such a *nidhi* (treasure hoard) for a human being that you can use as much as you want, even when all the money in your house is finished.

Yatra gaavo bhoori shringaa aayaasaan.

There is a mantra given in the Rig Veda: Where does Bhagwan live?

He lives where there are many cows with long horns.

That means Bhagwan lives in Gokul.

There are three form of bhakti.

1. *Vaidhee bhakti.*
2. *Raagaanugaa bhakti*
3. *Raagaatmika bhakti.*

In Vraja the bhakti in the life of the gopis, Yashoda Maiya and gwala baal is the ragatmika bhakti. If we bring the bhakti of their lives into our life, our bhakti will become ragatmika bhakti. Let the *raaga* (attachment) of Yashoda come into our life. She doesn't let Bhagwan out of her sight for a moment! She holds Him in her lap and feeds Him. She does *daana* (charity) for her child; she does vrata, and does good for the poor.

For whom does she do this? 'Let my Lala, Shri Krishna, get sukha. Let not a hair of his head be harmed.' Shri Krishna was Yashoda Maiya's life!

When Nanda Baba returned alone from Mathura Yashoda asked, 'Where have you left my Lala? How could you leave him and come home alive?'

This is a tremendous statement for a wife to make to her husband! 'You left our prema, a piece of our heart in Mathura, and came home alive and breathing?'

Nanda Baba said, 'Just think, Yashoda, had I died writhing with anguish in front of Shri Krishna – or if I die after coming here – won't the news reach Shri Krishna? And, if he gets this news, how much will it pain him? How he will lament! He will cry, "Oh, my Maiya! Oh my Baba! They died out of my *viraha* (pain of separation)!" Just think of the state of Shri Krishna's hriday if that were to happen!

We will always stay alive, even if every moment is agony because of being separated from our Lala. Our beloved Kanhaiya should never get news that we are

dead. Let him never come to hear that we had tears in our eyes. Let him never find out that we suffer because of being parted from him.'

See the *vilaasa* (luxurious pleasure) of the Bhagwat-Dharma! When Uddhavaji came to Vraja every lane and pathway was clean. All the houses were decorated. The gopis were singing, buttermilk was being churned in every home. They sang, 'Krishna will come today! Krishna will come today!'

The gopis would wake up early and prepare fresh butter and weave garlands to offer Shri Krishna when He came. This was the state of every household. There was no sign of despondency. If hope breaks, where is the prema? There is no greater source of hope! In prema there is *aakaankshaa* (strong desire), *aashaa* (hope) and *prateekshaa* (eager anticipation). Prema has *utkanthaa* (longing), *vyaakulataa* (agitation); prema never creates *niraashaa* (hopelessness) in a person's life. It is the nature of prema that it does not permit giving up of hope. A premi can never feel despair. To lose hope means to doubt the beloved. If a premi thinks, 'He will not come,' it means that she thinks he no longer loves her.

Look; if you think, 'I have great prema for him, but he does not love me,' the prema in your heart will reduce. But if you think, 'He loves me very much; I am not able to love him as much,' your prema will increase. Prema reduces when you feel you love more and increases when you feel he loves you more. This is the nature of prema, and this is why hope never breaks. 'Shri Krishna is staying away because of circumstances beyond his control, else he'd have come back to us,' thought the gopis. 'Something must have cropped up to delay his return.' Prema should not be connected to actions; prema feeds at time and leaves us hungry at times.

E`kdaarbhakamaadaaya svaankamaaropya bhaaminee,

prasnutam paayayaamaasa stanam sne`ha pariplutaa.

Peeta praayasya jananee saa tasya ruchirasmitam,

mukham laalayatee raajan jrimbhato dadrishe` idam.

(10. 7. 34 -35)

Yashoda Maiya is fair and her Lala is blue-hued. It looks as though a blue lotus has bloomed on the lake of *sacchidaananda* (Sat = pure existence + Chit = pure consciousness + Anand = pure bliss: the Brahman) that is Maiya's lap.

Avaaghnaatam bhringairanupahatamoorveestanabharaih.

A lotus that no bee ever smelled, no ripple of the lake of Sacchidananda ever touched – Shyam Sundar like a blue sapphire on Yashoda Maiya's lap.

Maiya picked up her Lala and began to feed Him. White droplets of milk fell on the face of the sapphire. They looked like pearls dropped on Shri Krishna's face. His eyes met Maiya's eyes sometimes, as Shyam Sundar suckled His mother lovingly. Mother Yashoda experienced deep joy. Then the thought came that Kanhaiya may get an upset stomach if He is overfed.

It is the way of prema that a person does not think only about his own sukha and wellbeing. A premi thinks about the sukha and wellbeing of the loved one. There is Yoga even in prema bhoga, in giving pleasure to the loved one. There is *tyaaga* (giving up) even in prema shringar. There is shanti even in prema *madhurataa* (experiencing the sweetness of prema), and there is *viyoga* (separation) even in *pre'ma samyoga* (the union of lovers). In prema, to die is to live. Visha becomes amrita. Prema changes the nature of the srishti. Prema never reduces; it ripples in the hriday.

Yashoda Maiya thought, 'Lala may get indigestion if he drinks too much milk.'

Ahire`va gatih pre`saahsvabhaava kutilaa bhavet`.

Just as a snake's movement is full of twists and turns, prema also moves in strange ways. It runs away if called. It turns away if brought face to face. The passage of prema is very different. It is not always favorable; there are times when it is quite contrary. If a loved one demonstrates his love, he also gives a loving pinch at times. If he applies chandan to the forehead, he also administers an occasional smack! Prema is not only feeding; it is also making the other go hungry. Prema is not being together constantly; it is also to stay apart sometimes.

The Vrihadaranyaka Upanishad has a description of the meeting of a husband and wife.

Sadyathaapriyayaa samparisanavo vaahyam naantaram.

To escape from chores and snatch a moment together, to meet and part, and meet again, with the feeling of meeting for the first time is what happens in prema.

Prathama samaagama lajjitamaa patuchaatu shatairanukoolam.

(Geeta Govind)

The Geet Govind describes that every time the lovers meet, it has the rapture of the first meeting.

The poets of Vrindavan, the Mahatmas have described this.

Milada rahata maano kabahu milain naa,

bhagavad-rasikarasikakee baate` rasika binaa kou samujha sake` naa.

Shri Radha and Krishna meet as though they've never met before. Only those who take rasa in Bhagwan understand the sweetness of their meeting.

The method of *preeti* (love) is strange, indeed!

Yashoda Maiya's doubt about Shri Krishna overfeeding is also the nature of prema.

Anishtaasankeeni bandhuhridayaani bhavanti.

In prema there is a tendency to fear harm coming to the loved one.

Now, how was Maiya to stop her Lala from suckling her? Maiya looked into His eyes and kissed Him. He smiled and forgot to suckle, but He felt like laughing at her concern.

Jrimbhato dadrise` idam.

Lala yawned. ‘Oh, Maiya! Why are you anxious? The whole world abides in My stomach – you are not only My Maiya; you are everybody’s Maiya. All beings are seated in My stomach, drinking your milk.’

Dugdham pibasi bhooryaalpake`see.

I told you this as a sample of the feeling that comes when there is vatsalya.

Shyam Sundar showed His *aishvarya* (divine glory) – ‘Look; the whole world sits in My stomach and drinks your milk, Maiya!

Vishvam vibhaagi payasoasya na ke`valoaham,

asmaadadarshi harinaa kimu vishvamassye`.

(Bhakti Rasayana 7. 41, by Shri Hari Suri)

The whole world is entitled to your milk.’ Bhagwan showed Maiya the whole world inside Him.

Aishwarya is not effective before prema-vatsalya. Bhagwan showed His aishwarya to Maiya.

Aishwarya before Maiya?! That is totally contrary to the vatsalya bhava!

Maiya said, ‘There is nothing in Lala’s mouth. I’m imagining things. It’s the fault of my wretched eyes!

Nimeelya mrigashaavakaakshee ne`tre` aaseet suvismitaa.

(Confused, Maiya shut her beautiful eyes.)

Please don’t think that prema means only to feed and be favorable. Maiya took a stick and tried to make Kanhaiya spit out the earth He had eaten. She tied Him to an *ookhala* (stone mortar) when He broke a pot of butter. Our bhaktas have viewed these episodes from different angles.

Shri Ramanuja Acharyaji Maharaj says that Bhagwan did His leelas out of compassion, to give joy to Yashoda Maiya. Shri Jeeva Goswamiji, Shri Chaitanya

Mahaprabhu, and Shri Vishwanath Chakravarty say that Yashoda Maiya's prema is so strong that it compels Bhagwan to become her child, and allow her to tie Him up. This is not anugraha – this is the *mahimaa* (greatness; splendor) of prema. Prema spreads over Bhagwan and He forgets His *bhagavattaa* (being Bhagwan). This is the opinion of the Gaudeshwara Sampradaya and the Vallabha Sampradaya.

Vallabhacharyaji says that it is Shri Krishna's kripa, His anugraha, that He allows Himself to be tied up by Yashoda Maiya, and spanked by her. He also cries; His face gets covered with *kaajala* (lamp black applied to the eyes). He sits in Vraja, walks and sways, so that the world can see His leelas. 'Let Me assume many *roopa* (forms) so that people can do dhyana and become immersed in thoughts about Me.'

The Acharyas of the Gaudeshwara Sampradaya have said, 'It is the greatness of prema that it can make Bhagwan a child, and make Him dance for the inducement of a lump of butter given by the gopis! Krishna puts one hand on His waist, lifts one hand above His head, and dances, taa-taa-thai! Taa-taa-thai!'

You will find many examples of Bhagwan becoming enslaved by the power of vatsalya prema.

You get the *adheenataa* (being ruled over) by Sakhya rasa. In Vatsalya there is no trace of aishwarya, but it is glimpsed occasionally in the Sakhya rasa. The *sakhaa* (friends) sometimes tell Shri Krishna, 'Separate your cows from ours – we are not your father's servants that we will graze your cows while you flirt with the gopis!

Naa hoon chaakara nandabaabaake`.

Come on! Graze the cows with us!' This is the Sakhya bhava. The gwala baal tell Shri Krishna 'We won't eat a single morsel of food without you. Shri Krishna tells them, 'Maiya made fresh butter in the morning, but I did not eat it; I brought it for you.'

That means, Bhagwan first feeds the gwala baal, and then He eats.

There is a description in the Vedas.

Dvaa suparnaa sayujaa sakhaayaa.

(There are two birds of the same age who are friends)

Shri Krishna has so much prema for the gwala baal that He gives them all the good food; He does not have it Himself. ‘*Anashnanyoabhi chaakasheeti*’ – the jeeva eats, the Ishwara does not eat. He is happy to feed others. The anand of the jeeva is in bhoga; it is bhoga sukha. The sukha of the Ishwara is in giving bhoga to others.

Vignan Bhikshu has defined Yoga as given in the Yoga Darshan – the anand of the Ishwara is when He gives food to all creatures, so that they feel satisfied. The Ishwara belches after that. ‘Oh, I am fully satisfied today.’ The jeeva, on the other hand, gets sukha when he gets bhoga.

Tayoranyah pippalam svaadu atti anashnanyoabhichaakasheeti.

(Two birds are sitting on a tree. One of them is eating the fruit whilst the other one is just watching.)

Shri Krishna lifted the Govardhan Parvat (mountain). I am giving you a glimpse of this leela because it is not possible to give a commentary on it in the limited time we have.

Indra had become habituated to receiving *bhe`ta-poojaa* (offerings-worship) from the people of Vraja. He considered it his right. So much so that when the people did not conduct the annual ritual, Indra ordered the clouds –

Pashootrayata samkshayam.

(Destroy all, including the animals)

Shri Krishna said, ‘Very well. We shall see!’

Look, Indra abides in Bhagwan’s arms. Bhagwan said, ‘If you want to shower heavy rain, I will place the burden of protecting all also on your head.’

When Indra used the *vaayavyaasta* (weapon of the wind) Shri Krishna lifted up the *parvataasta* (weapon of the mountain). The *me`ghaasta* (weapon of clouds) is the weapon for countering the *aagne`aasta* (the weapon of fire). And, the weapon of the unshakeable mountain renders the wind and rain futile.

Shri Krishna lifted up the Govardhan on the little finger of His left hand, standing there for seven days, with all the people and animals under the mountain. This means Bhagwan is always protecting us. Indra is the Devta of Karma. At times he gives sukha and at times he gives dukha. In karma there is paapa as well as punya, so Indra cannot always give sukha; he also has to give dukha at times. Bhagwan, however, is such that if you do Bhagwan's bhajan He will save you from dukha.

All the guala baal gathered round Shri Krishna. 'Krishna, you have been standing thus for seven days! Your feet would be hurting you. You have held up the Govardhan – your hand must be paining. You have not even slept! The mountain is on your left hand and you play the flute with your right hand. Come; let us hold up the mountain now. We can take the weight if you can! We beat you in wrestling, and we can run faster than you can. You are not more intelligent or educated than us. What difference is there between us and you?

Khe`laname`in ke` kaako gusaiyaan.

Come, pass the burden to Shridama. You play the flute. Let us press your left hand.'

Shri Krishna felt like laughing!

Unnidrasya yayustavaatra viratim sapta kshapaastishtthatah,

hanta shraantamivaasi nikshipa sakhe` shreedamapaanau girim,

doshnaste` karavaama kaamamadhunaa savyasya samvaahanam.

What prema the guala baal had for Shri Krishna! Shri Krishna said, 'Yes, My brothers, how much longer can I hold up the mountain without your help?' He never disdained their offer. One should never disdain a friend. If a friend offers help, it is wrong to consider him incapable and refuse his offer.

Shri Krishna said, 'Yes, My brothers, how can I carry on unless you help me? Hold up your staffs and take some of the weight.' All the gwala baal put up their staffs to help reduce the weight on Shri Krishna's hand. Later, whenever there was any talk about how Shri Krishna had lifted the mountains, they said, 'We also helped, by holding our staffs to share the weight! It wasn't Shri Krishna alone who held up the mountain!'

Shri Roop Goswami has written a poem called Hansa Doota. Hansa means a swan and doota means an envoy or messenger.

After Shri Krishna left for Mathura, Radha Rani's *sakhee* (friend) told a hansa, 'If you go to Mathura please tell Shri Krishna about the state of his gwala baal. Just see their condition for yourself, so you can tell him.

*Kansaare`virahajjvaroagnijanita – jvaalaavalee – jarjaraah gopaah shailatate`
tathaa shithilitashvaasaankuraah she`rate`*,

*mandam mandamakarvalochanajalairaplaavayan nishchalaan shochantyadya
yathaa chiram parichayasnigdhaa kurangaa api.*

See the plane at the foot of the Govardhan, Hansa; can you see who lie there unconscious? I put cotton wool to their nose to see whether they are still breathing. Do you know what illness they suffering from? They are afflicted with the pain of viraha because Shri Krishna has left them and gone.

Virahajjvaroagnijanita – jvaalaavalee – jarjaraah.

The fire of viraha that rages in their hriday has rendered them unconscious. They hardly breathe. See the deer they used to play with – how close they come to the gwala baal. They sniff at them to see whether they are still living. Their tears fall on the faces of the gwala baal.

Shithilitashvaasaanguraah she`rate`.

The gwala baal lie inert. The deer try to revive them by wetting their faces with their tears. Go and tell Shri Krishna what their condition is, because of being separated from him!'

When the same prema as the gwala baal had for Shri Krishna arises in our hriday, our chitta-vritti shifts away from the sansara and turns towards Bhagwan. Our vritti becomes bhagavat-vritti.

One day Shridama said, 'The fruits on the taal trees look delicious. What a lovely fragrance they spread! Let's go and eat some.' What he actually wanted was to give Shri Krishna the pleasure of eating the fruits, but he does not say so openly. Prema does not need to be taught anything. Prema never says, 'I don't know.' The Guru of prema stays in the heart.

Pre`ma gurunaa gauree ganah paathyate` karnaakarni jane`shu.

To whisper among themselves.

Sangopanaangikritih.

To hide certain things from others.

How do these little children learn these things? These little girls of eight and ten instinctively hide some things from their parents. They whisper their secrets to each other. The mother and father think that they are simple and innocent, but they outsmart their parents. Who teaches them the skill of keeping secrets? Who teaches them to whisper these things only to their friends? When prema rises in the heart this prema-guru teaches them all this.

If you want to be established in the *sanmaatra* (pure existence) you should practice the eight steps of Yoga and do dhyana. Samadhi gives the experience of the pure existence of the Atma. If you want to experience the *chinmaatra* (pure consciousness) do *shravana* (listen to, and absorb the purport of discourses) of Vedanta. You will experience the effulgence of the pure consciousness that is hidden in your hriday. This is the *vishva-adhishthaana* (substratum of the world), *vishva-prakaasha* (universal effulgence) chinmatra. Know the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman. You will get the knowledge of the *chid-vastu* (the object that is pure consciousness).

However, if you want to obtain the experience of Anand, it is Sat+Chit+Anand. The experience of chinmatra through Gnan, the experience of sanmatra through

Yoga, and the experience of the Paramatma – who is anandmatra – through bhakti-prema. This is not the path of *kaama* (desire); this is the path of prema.

Nijaangamapi yaa gopyo mame`ti samupaasate`.

(The gopis worship Me even through their bodies.)

The gopi does the upasana of her body. She oils herself and combs her hair. She wears a beautiful sari and ornaments. For whom? Is it for her own pleasure or for showing off to others? No! She does it because it will give pleasure to Shri Krishna. This body of hers belongs to Shri Krishna.

Nigoodha pre`mavaadanah.

(The ways of prema are very profound.)

The gopis eat for Shri Krishna. They put the morsels of food in their mouth, and the food goes into their stomach. The purpose is to keep the body healthy because it belongs to Shri Krishna. Shri Krishna will be dukhi if he sees that the gopi's body is not healthy. What did the gopis care about their own body? The prema of the gopis is extraordinary and Shri Krishna's prema for the gopis is also extraordinary! The Mahatmas have given wonderful descriptions of it.

There is a place called Barsana in Vraja. It is called *barasaanaa* and also *barasaanu*. The meaning is a beautiful plane at the foot of a mountain. The Sadhus call it the Vrishbhanu Choti – the Peak of Vrishbhanu. Vrishbhnu was the name of Radha Rani's father.

In Barsana there is a very narrow passage called the Sankari Khor. *Saanakaree* means narrow, and *khori* means lane. Krishna came from one end, and Radha Rani came in from the other end. No one else was there. The lane is still there in Barsana. You can see it if you go there. There is a Mayur Kutī – hut of peacocks. Radha Rani used to dance there, like a peacock, which is why it is given this name.

So, Radha and Krishna encountered one another at each end of this narrow lane. No one else was there. The lane is still there; you can see it if you go to Barsana.

There is Mayur Kuti – Radha Rani used to dance there, like a peacock, which is why it was given this name.

So, Radha and Krishna saw each other as they entered the lane. The thought came to Krishna, ‘good we met here; now I will get a chance to touch Radha. I will embrace her.’ He went forward. Then the thought came, ‘Radha is so delicate and My body is so hard. She will be bruised if I touch her.’

The Sankhya Darshan says that Prakriti is the most *sukumaara* (tender; delicate).

Prakriti sukumaara na kinchitidi asti me`matirbhavati.

Prakriti cannot bear the burden of the Purusha’s eyes. (Prakriti is the power of illusion and Creation of the Ishwara; the Purusha.)

Yaa drishta smitipurnadrishtipathamupaiti purushasya.

Shri Krishna said, ‘Radha will get hurt if I touch her. The burden of My eyes will fall upon her if I look at her.

Drishti hooko bhaara na samhaara sakati hai.

What am I to do?’

Shri Krishna’s eyes shut themselves. Radha Rani stood at the other end of the Sankari Khor. No one else was there, but Krishna did not have the courage to touch her.

So, the Sankari Khor came into Shri Krishna’s mana. Shri Radha Rani came into His mana.

Manahoon ke`karana te`chhuvata darata hai.

He is afraid to touch her even with the hands of the mana. So –

Baari baari doorahin te`paayana parata hain.

Radhaacharana bilushthita ruchirashikhandam hari vande`.

Shri Krishna bowed down to both feet of Radha Rani, turn by turn.

In prema there is no kama or bhaya. Goswami Tulsidasji has described the wedding ceremony of Rama and Sita. When they began to circle the sacred fire, Kamadev (the presiding deity of lust) and his wife Rati were longing to see them, but they were not able to face Rama and Sita.

Raamasiya tanakee parichhaaheen,

jagamagaati mani khambhana maanheen.

Manahun madana rati dhari bahoo roopaa,

de`khahin raama vivaaha anoopaa.

Darasa laalasaa sakucha na chhoree,

pragatata durata bahori-bahoree.

Madan (Kamdev) and Rati would hide when Ramachandra came forward, and manifest when He turned away, because they longed to see them get married.

Pre`maiva goparaamaanaam kaama ityagamat prathaam,

ityuddhavaadayaopye`na vaanchhati bhagavat-priyaah.

There is no kama in the hearts of the gopis; there is only prema. They do not love Shri Krishna for their own sukha – they love Him in order to give sukha to Him. This is the fine line that separates kama from prema. Sukha is in the middle. On one side is the *pre`mee* (lover) and on the other side is the *priyatama* (beloved). Does the premi pull sukha towards himself or does he push it towards the priyatam? In present times, you can place a ten rupee note in the middle and see. Both will pull it towards themselves!

The nature of prema is that the premi pushes sukha towards the priyatam. This bhagavat prema is a *divya* (divine; sublime) prema. It drenches not only the life of humans, or the hearts of human beings, it drenches the whole world with prema-rasa. The Bhagwat-Dharma is a description of this prema.

I will also tell you about less profound things. I am not afraid to talk about lighter matters. Look; a human being indulges in kama-bhoga, doesn't he? He does. Does he do prema or not? He does. However, because of not having a comprehensive understanding of prema, mistakes are made in the life of humans.

I state unequivocally that the right teaching about prema cannot be obtained in schools and colleges. If you want to learn the true meaning of prema you must listen to discourses on the leela of the gopis and Shri Krishna. It is of great importance in the life of a human being. However, if this teaching is given in the name of mere physical lust it will sully your chitta. If a true glimpse of the pure relationship of the gopis and Shri Krishna comes into your heart it will give you the highest kalyan.

The Bhagwat-Dharma is not only for the proper application of objects, or the teaching about karma or Gnan; it is something of vital importance. The prema of the gopis and Shri Krishna reveals the essence of true prema, so that an ocean of prema heaves in our hriday.

Bhagwan showers anugraha on us, in the principle of Bhakti. It may be when we are in a state of shanti or *vikshe`pa* (agitation), whether we are poor or rich, ugly or good looking, diseased or healthy, in life and in death. The skill of retaining equanimity should be present in our life.

The Charvaks say that *jeevan – marana* (life – death) are the Dharma of this sansara. A person should remain *nirdvandva* (free of doubts and dualities) and not bother about them. The followers of the Sankhya Darshan say that a person should develop *drashtaa-vive`ka* (the discrimination that we are the Atma that is the drashta who is merely an onlooker of the sansara), and watch the play of Prakriti; but, the play must go on! The Yogis say that by sitting in a Samadhi for an hour or two, they get so intoxicated that they remain unaffected by anything that happens.

However, it will not be a Darshan at all if it has no compatibility with the sansara. Darshan does not mean sitting in a cave all day, or entering a Samadhi, or to keep lamenting. Yoga is compatible with *vyavahaara* (interacting in the world). Sankhya, too, is compatible, through vivek. It is present in the *svaroopavasthaa* (state of being established in the Self) of the Jains. It is there in Buddhism, where *shoonya* (nothing; a vacuum) is the ultimate reality and the interactive world is a temporary awareness.

In the Vedanta Darshan the Atma is *nirle`pa* (unsullied) and *nirvikaara* (not subject to distortion). All interaction is superficial. There is compatibility with vyavhar.

The principle of Bhakti has staunch faith in the Ishwara. It has *sharanaagati* (surrender to Bhagwan). This sharanagati protects a jeeva at all times – in war, in a wilderness, in loneliness and in a crowd. This is the special feature of the principle of the Bhagwat. In this principle there is nowhere the Ishwara does not protect us.

Asura a bhagavat.

This is the Ishwara's leela! In it there are Putana, Shatakasura, Trinavarta, Bakasura, Vatsasura, and Aghasura. It is done for them to become fit for Bhagwan's bhajan through physical change. From the viewpoint of our Hindu Dharma, birth and death are of no great importance. You can call it the Hindu Dharma, the Vedic Dharma or the Bharatiya Sanskriti.

The people who believe that there is only one lifetime say that there is nothing after death. They believe they will not be reborn. So, for them their life is of great importance. They say, 'don't kill the sinner; kill the sin.' However, our Dharma says that the sinner never actually dies; only his instruments – with which paapa is done – are changed. And so, if the shareer of a paapi is killed sometimes, the Atma of the paapi is not killed. The Atma is shuddha, buddha, Mukta; it separates itself from the shareer.

People who cast aspersions on Bhagwan's charitra, that there is *himsa* (violence) in the charitra of Shri Krishna and Shri Rama, do not understand that in their opinion, death is permanent. The person does not get another birth in their opinion. Therefore, even a paapi's shareer is of great importance. That is not the case in our principle.

So, when it is possible to be born again – the Atma can meet Bhagwan because it is eternal – the body is not considered to be of much importance when the person believes in reincarnation. I am talking about the people who have a Dharma; we need not talk about those who have no Dharma.

Bhagwan does kalyan through himsa as well as *ahimsaa* (non-violence); else it would be wrong for Him to do *pralaya* (Dissolution). Very well; let us accept that from the Ishwara's viewpoint death is not right. But, when He does pralay of the whole world, of the Universe, it is all right! *Kayaamata* (the end of the world) is done for the good of the jeeva. Can't the Ishwara do what is good for the jeeva by the viyoga of one person? This is the Vedic principle.

What I wish to say is that the kalyan of some people is done through *shareera-viyoga* (being separated from the body).

Manye`asuraan

bhaagavataamsagryadheeshaan

samrambhamaargaabhinivishtachittaan.

These Asuras do Bhagwan's dhyana. When their *dhyaanaatmaka* (made of dhyana) shareer is no longer suited to be contained in their gross shareer Bhagwan separates them from their Asura shareer and sends them into a bhakta-shareer, a bhagavat shareer, or to a *divya-loka* (divine realm).

Putana becomes a mother after her death. Shatakasura becomes *chaitanya* (pure consciousness). Trinavarta becomes an uncle (Shri Krishna called him 'Uncle'). *Hataarigatidaayakah* – it is a special quality of Bhagwan Shri Krishna's charitra that when He kills an Asura shareer He gives a *daivee* (divine) shareer to that person. He makes the Asuras His bhaktas, they become His servants; they become bhagavats. There are some for whom it is not necessary to change the shareer. For example, the Kaliya Nag.

Bhagwan shatters Indra's arrogance. He shows that Brahma's skill of Creation cannot compare with His. Rudra's power of destruction is seen to be ineffective in the fight with Banasura; Bhagwan's weapon of drowsiness makes it impossible for him to stop yawning and fight! The laws of Brahma's Creation are dispersed before Shri Krishna's. These are *parichhinna* (separate) shaktis.

To create, Brahma needs Prakriti. He needs a jeeva, an antahkarana, and karmas. He can create a being only if these are available to him. Shri Krishna creates as many forms as He wants out of Himself, without a jeeva, antahkarana, or *karma-sanskaara* (the subtle subconscious impressions created by karmas), without Prakriti, *de`sha* (place), or *kaala* (time). This is shown in the episode of Brahma's moha being broken. Indra's arrogance was also broken. It was enough to make both of them bhagavats. The bhagavat-Tattva was established in them. Apart from this, these leelas contain many other viewpoints.

What are the other viewpoints?

How is it that the Asuras are permitted to enter into Bhagwan's leelas? It is because their presence reveals the glory of Bhagwan's bhaktas. Shri Vishwanth Chakravarty has pointed out that when even a demoness like Putana – who

murdered little children – is given the status of Bhagwan’s mother because she came to breast-feed Shri Krishna, what position will Bhagwan give to the ladies and cows who give milk to Bhagwan with love in their hearts?

Yashoda Maiya sits on the throne; no other is fit to touch even her shadow. By giving *sadgati* (Moksha) to Putana, the evaluation of Yashoda Maiya becomes supreme. What won’t Krishna – who gives sadgati to a demoness who feeds Him with a wish to kill – give to the cows and other loving mothers? What won’t He give to Rohini, Devki, and Yashoda? Here, there is no question of give and take! Thus, the charitra of Putana is one that enhances the glory of the bhagavats.

Shri Krishna drank Putana’s milk, and gave her sadgati. He touched Shatakasura with His foot, and gave him sadgati. He clambered on Trinavarta’s chest and gave him sadgati. He caught Bakasura’s mouth and gave him sadgati. He caught the tail and foot of Vatsasura and gave him sadgati. He gave Nalakubar and Minigreev sadgati by uprooting the trees they were imprisoned in. He entered the mouth of Aghasura and gave him sadgati. Agha means paapa. Aghasura represents the Asura of paapa. Even the greatest paapa is destroyed when Bhagwan comes into it. The Asura gets sadgati.

There is another principle of Bhakti that is not revealed here. I will tell you about it.

One point is that the shareer was transformed by *karma-gati* (the power of the karma). Secondly, the bhaktas were elevated. And thirdly, a relationship with Bhagwan was created.

Now, if we look from a fourth viewpoint, these stories give the teaching of the Bhagwat-Dharma. This is: when do Asuras come into a bhakta’s life? This point has been taken right through the whole Bhagwat.

When the *drishti* (vision; focus) of a bhakta shifts away from Bhagwan to anything else, that is when an Asura manifests. This viewpoint is seen repeatedly in the Bhagwat.

For example, Putana comes into Yashoda Maiya's house. Shyam Sundar is just four or five days old. The sixth day ceremony is not done yet. Shyam Sundar is fast asleep. The people of Vraja are enthralled by Putana's beauty. Yashoda Maiya – *nireekshamaane` janani hyatishthataam* – looks at her with pleasure.

Bhagwan said, 'Maiya, I have come to your house, leaving Vaikuntha. I lie here, a helpless, toothless infant; and you are rapt at the sight of Putana! Very well; I will go into Putana's lap!' That means, Bhagwan is displeased with His bhaktas when they turn away from Him and focus on other things. Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj gives this a symbolic interpretation – *avidyaa pootanaa nashtaa* – Putana is avidya. Shri Krishna destroys avidya. Her body is *shatakoshaatmaka* – six koshas (about twelve miles) long. It becomes *bhagavadeeya* (divine) because Bhagwan has drunk her milk.

Shatakasura is the personification of *jadataa* (lack of consciousness). He becomes Mukta by Bhagwan's touch. On this occasion, too, Yashoda Maiya is engrossed in something else. Trinavarta comes when Yashoda Maiya left Shri Krishna to attend to household chores. On the occasion of the falling of the two trees Maiya had tied Shri Krishna to the ookhal and gone indoors for some work. Thus, Shri Krishna *ghatam bhitvaa patam chitvaa* (breaks the pot and tears the cloth) – attracts people's attention to Himself.

Bakasura is *dambha* (hypocrisy); Bhagwan kills him. Vatsasura is moha; he is worldly attachment; Bhagwan destroys it. Vyomasura is a jada Samadhi, Keshi is a form of the Vedas, and Vrishabhasura is a form of Dharma. Whenever the feeling of an Asura – selfishness, cruelty etc – arises, Bhagwan shows *tiraskaara* (rejection) for that *bhaava* (feeling). Kansa is *ahankaara* (arrogance). This is merely an indication. The *antahkarana-saakshee* (inner witness) of the Bhagwat is so divine that it is sufficient for anyone, of any group, at any time, in any place, to attach his mana to Bhagwan.

When the gwala baal and the cows walk into Aghasura's mouth Bhagwan also walks in with them. He goes wherever His bhaktas go. He is always with them in every situation. I told you this because you should not consider Shri Krishna leela to be some childish play or insignificant stories. It contains profound truths.

Pashupakshi bhagavats.

Up to now it has been made clear that Asuras are also bhagavats. Now we learn that even pashu-pakshi – animals and birds – are bhagavats.

*Gaavastu krishnamukhanirgatave`nugeetapeeyusha-muttabhita-karnaputaih
pibantyah,*

*shaavaah snutastanapayah kavalaah smatasthuh govindamaatmani
drishaashrukalaah srtishantyah.*

(10. 21. 13)

When Shyam Sundar stood on a hillock, with His feet crossed, playing His flute, and His yellow stole fluttering in the gentle breeze, the ears of the cows turned towards the sound. They drank the sweet music with the cups of their ears. They were so rapt that they could neither swallow nor spit out the grass they were chewing. The calves that were drinking their milk also stood enthralled by the sound of the flute. They stopped drinking milk. The milk dribbled out from the side of their mouth. They had tears in their eyes. Their bodies tingled with ecstasy.

The meaning of this is that even the animals in the Shrimad Bhagwat are bhagavats. They, too, are Bhagwan's bhaktas. Even the birds are Bhagwan's bhaktas.

*Praayo bataamba vihagaa munayo vane`asmin trishne`kshitam taduditam
kalave`nugeetam,*

*aaruha ye` dumabhujan ruchirapravaalaan shrinvantyameelitadrisho
vigataanyavaachah.*

(10. 21. 14)

The birds sit on the trees. They are doing Bhagwan's darshan with wide open eyes. They are silent, immersed in anand.

*Dhanyaah sma moodhamatayoapi harinya e`taa yaa
nandanandanamupaattvichitrave`sham,*

*aakarnya venuranitam sahakrishnasaaraah poojaam dadhurvirachitaam
pranayaavalokaih.*

(10. 21. 11)

The does are *dhanya* – they are blessed! Along with their husbands, the Krishnasara deer, they are drinking in the sweetness of Shyam Sundar’s beauty with their big eyes.

The trees are also bhagavats. When Shri Krishna comes into the *vana* (forest) they stoop low to offer Him the fruits and flowers their boughs are laden with.

*Nrityantyamee shikhina eedya mudaa harinyah kurvanti gopya iva te`
priyameekshane`na,*

*sooktaishcha kokilaganaa grihamaagataaya dhanyaa vanaukasa iyaan hi sataam
visargh.*

(10. 15. 7)

The *koyala* (black cuckoos) begin to call out when they see Shri Krishna, and the peacocks begin to dance. The deer drink in His beauty with their big, beautiful eyes. The prithivi thrills in every grain and blade of grass. The trees ooze sweet juice. Lotuses bloom in water. The condition of Prakriti becomes delightful in every way. The directions become limpid by the darshan of Shri Krishna. The forest flourishes, water becomes crystal clear, fire is quieted, the gentle breeze is fragrant, and the sky is bright with twinkling stars. It is as though all Nature is filled with love for Bhagwan when He manifests.

These animals, these birds, the Prithivi, the trees, creepers and shrubs – what all am I to describe? Every episode is such that it deserves to be spoken on for years!

Gopi-prema.

I must tell you something about the gopis. The Bhagwat is incomplete without them. *Maitri* (friendship) is the predominant feeling with the gwala baal. With the gopis, their prema and *samarpana* (total surrender) is the predominant factor in their existence. One special quality of their prema is that it is *atoota* (cannot be broken). You may blame Shri Krishna for the injustice He showed to the gopis, but had He not done so, the world would never have known the kind of prema they had for Shri Krishna.

Shri Krishna could certainly have stayed longer at Vrindavan with the gopis, but later on, who would have known about them? No one! The name of gopis would have been lost to the world. The hriday of the gopis was revealed when they were parted from Shri Krishna. It manifested in all its amazing purity.

Firstly, their eyes were thirsty –

*Tam gorajashchhuritakuntalabaddhabarhavananyaprasoon – ruchire`kshana –
chaaruhaasam,*

*ve`num kvanantamanugairanugeetakeertim gopyo didrikshitadrishoabhyagaman
same`taa.*

(10. 15. 42)

The gopis are like a flowing stream, wave after wave. Where do they do?

Their eyes are full of longing – *didrikshitadrishoabhyagaman same`taah –
didrikshataa drisho yaasaam* – Shyam Sundar is coming back after spending the whole day in the vana. His hair is covered with the dust of the cows' hooves.

Navaghana para maano jheenee badariyaa, sobhaa rasa barasaavane,

lataki lataki manamohana aavane.

Jhoomi jhoomi pada dharata bhoomi para, gati maatanga lajaavane.

Surdasji has described the scene. New, dark rain clouds come overhead, with light, white scattered puffs of clouds crossing over them. They shower the rasa of

sobhaa (beauty). This is how he compares Shri Krishna's dark body and hair, covered with the dust that rises from the hooves of the cows.

The gopis long for this sight of their Beloved. Even in this, if any other thought flits through their mind, they blame themselves. 'Oh, why did my mind shift from Shri Krishna and think of any other even fleetingly?'

One point is that the gopis' have a thirst for Shri Krishna before meeting Him, and they experience *tripti* (deep satisfaction) when they get His darshan.

The other point is that they hear the sound of Shri Krishna's flute, and see His sublime beauty. The third point is that they do a *vrata* (ritual fast) to obtain Him.

If a person wants something but makes no effort to obtain it, how will he get what he wants? One person said, 'Maharaj, what can I do to obtain the Ishwara? When the Ishwara wants to meet me, He will come to me.' This means that the man has no desire for the Ishwara; it is the Ishwara who should have a desire to meet him! If a person leaves it to chance whether he gets what he wants or not, it means he has no real thirst for the object.

In prema there is a *laalasa* (craving) – *aashaabandhah samutkanthaa naamagaane` sadaa ruchi*. There is an *aashaa* (hope) in her heart that she will meet her Beloved. There is an *utkanthaa* (yearning) that does not permit a premi to sit in peace.

The gopis kept finding excuses to go and get a darshan of Shri Krishna. Excuses are always false! One day, a gopi went to Maiya in the morning. Yashoda Maiya smiled welcomingly and asked, 'How is it that you have come so early Gopi?' What was she to say? She said, 'My Maiya said that being Tuesday, we have to apply *gobara* (cow dung) paste on the floor. She sent me to get gobar from you as we don't have enough.'

'Go to the cowshed and take as much as you want,' replied Maiya. The gopi went and filled a basket. She looked round to see if there was anyone to help her lift it on to her head. Shyam Sundar strolled in. 'What are you looking for, Gwalin?' He asked.

‘I can’t lift this basket onto my head without help. Will you lift it for me, Kanhaiya?’

‘I will help you, but what will you give me in return?’

‘I will give you a ball of butter,’ said the gopi.

‘Am I your father’s servant that I will work for just one ball of butter?’ said Shyam Sundar. ‘I won’t lift up the basket!’

‘No, Lala, please help me. I will give you as many balls of butter as the baskets you help me with.’

‘One ball of butter for every basket?’ reiterated Shyam Sundar. ‘But how will I know how many baskets I have lifted up to you head? I can’t count.’

‘I will put one dot of gobar on your face every time you lift up a basket for me,’ said the gopi.’

Basket after basket was filled by the gopi and lifted by Shri Krishna. His whole face was covered with dots of gobar!

Naradji came. He said, ‘What is happening here, Maharaj? *Gomaya mandita bhaala-kapolam* –dots of gobar all over your forehead and cheeks?’

Shri Krishna told the gopi, ‘Now, Sakhi, start counting the balls of butter you have to give Me.’

‘Twenty five,’ she said.

‘Not twenty five; it must be thirty five! You are telling lies! Oh, all right, give me twenty five.’

‘Not so fast!’ said the gopi. ‘You will get them, but first you must dance for me!’

Chhachhiyaa bhara chhaacha pai naacha nachaavai.’

(The gopis made Shri Krishna dance for a cupful of buttermilk!)

The gopis would come with the excuse of complaining. ‘Shyam Sundar steals our butter.’ They tried to obtain Him by doing the puja of Katyayini Devi, and Shri Krishna came there. The gopis come one day and Shri Krishna comes one day – this is the leela between the jeeva and the Ishwara.

Shri Krishna thought, ‘Let Me see whether they have the capacity to endure injustice. If they ask for justice, doing *satyaagraha* (non-violent non-cooperation), they will be told to go and become a *dharmaatmaa*, and do Yagna-japa!’ For those who walk on the path of prema, everything about the Beloved is dear, even injustice.

It is another matter that Bhagwan told them that they should not bathe naked in the river. *Aavarana-bhanga* (breaking the covering of Maya that hides the Atma) is necessary for *aatma-saakshaatkaara* (the direct personal experience of being the Atma; not the body). Like the pleasure of the union between a husband and wife is not complete if there is a garment between them, avaran-bhang is needed in *kaama* (lust) and it is also necessary in Gnan. (The body is a garment that is a sheath of the Atma.)

Lajjaa (shyness), *shankaa* (doubt), *bhaya* (fear), *glaani* (aversion), *jugupsaa* (disgust), *kula* (family lineage), *sheela* (virtuous conduct) and *jaati* (caste; group) will remain obstacles.

Lajjaa, shankaa bhayam glaanirvijugupsaa tathaiva cha,

kulam sheelam gnaatiritihyashtau paashaah prakeertitaah.

These are eight fetters.

The fact is that the gopis’ prema is such that they don’t see Shri Krishna’s injustice; they see His prema. A premi enjoys even the pinches, bites, scratches, and pulling of garments done by the priyatam. Shri Krishna saw that ultimately, the gopis told Him, ‘We like everything You do.’

The *cheera-harana* (stealing of garments) leela happened after the gopis’ puja for obtaining Shri Krishna as their Lord. Avaran-bhang happened. You can observe that the mental state of the ladies involved in Shri Krishana’s leelas is a special

state. The episode of Kubja is separate, the episode of the *yagna-patni* – the wives of the Brahmins who doing a Yagna – is separate. The episodes of the gopis are separate, the episode with the *bhilni* – ladies of the forest tribe – is separate, and the episodes of His wives are separate.

Shri Krishna lifted up the Govardhan in order to reveal His qualities of the Krishna Avatar. He saved the whole of Vraja. He displayed His aishwarya in the realm of Varun, the Devta of water, and at Vaikuntha.

The lifting of the Govardhan is a leela of this world. Bhagwan puts aside the Devta Indra, to protect the beings of Vraja. He went to Varun-loka and showed that He is worshipped by even the Devtas. In Vaikuntha-loka, He showed that He is supreme. After that came the episode of the *raasa* (group dancing) with the gopis.

In the episode of the Raas leela Bhagwan draws the gopis towards Himself. His power of attraction is shown. He does not draw everyone to Himself; He only draws the ones He has chosen. For the people He wants to be *vimukha* (turned away) from Him, He creates *sanshaya* (doubt) in their minds. He gives them *bhogaasakti* (attachment to worldly pleasures). *Aanukoolyapraatikoolyaabhyaam vyavastha* – Bhagwan bestows *preeti* (love) for Himself in the hearts of those He wants to be drawn to Him.

Thus, the gopis' absolute attraction for Shri Krishna, through Shri Krishna, and then their *sannyasa* (renouncing the world) is described. They gave up wealth, their domestic duties, bothering about their appearance and food, and everything this world has to offer. They also gave up Swarga, which is the fruit of living as per their instituted Dharma.

A person who wants to obtain the Ishwara cannot afford to keep his eye on insignificant things. If he does, how can he ever obtain Bhagwan? The gopis' Sanyas includes renouncing Artha, Dharma, and bhoga. Bhagwan manifested His extraordinary beauty! Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj says that the *niyama* (rule) in this world is that Dharma is what Bhagwan tells us to do, and adharm is to do what is contrary to Bhagwan's command. The gopis, however, reversed this rule.

‘Go back to your homes, Gopis,’ said Bhagwan. ‘Your Dharma is to look after your homes and families.’

‘No, Krishna,’ said the gopis. ‘Your upadesha is faulty. We have renounced everything and come to surrender at Your feet. This is the Satya.’

To make Bhagwan’s words – which consist of virtue – a statement that is faulty is the greatness of Bhagwat-prema, of the Bhagwat-Dharma!

Shri Krishna gave the upadesha of Dharma, and the viraha in the heart of the gopis spilled out. They couldn’t contain their prema for Shri Krishna.

Maivam vibhoarhati bhavaan gaditam nrishamsam.

(10. 23. 29)

There was no kama in their heart.

*Pre`shtham priye`taramiva pratibhaashamaanam krishnam
tadarthavinivartitasarvakaamaah.*

(10. 29. 30)

Kama emerges from our *heenataa* (feeling of lacking). Our heenata means, ‘I am dukhi. I should get sukha. I must get bhoga.’ When you wish to get sukha from *laddoo* (a sweet ball of solidified milk or gram flour) you become very paltry. Have you ever thought about this?

Sukha is not in our heart or in our head or in our eyes. It is kept in laddoes, in the shops that sell delicious eatables. And you? You are dukhi without it. People have desire for the things that give them fleeting pleasure. They feel sukha lies in these objects.

Where on earth has this thirst come from? Have you ever given any thought to this? You were immersed in rasa once – you came out of there and forgot it. The memory of that rasa troubles you, and you wander around in search of that rasa. You feel you can get it from different objects and experiences. The *rasa-anubhooti* (experience of rasa) is a *smriti* (memory), but where is it?

The jeeva wanders in the world like a musk deer in the desert, seeking the source of the divine fragrance. It doesn't realize that the fragrance is within itself. Humans seek the divine fragrance of Bhagwan in worldly objects. They think it is in a woman, a man, in clothes, jewelry, a house, or a car. Oh – all these are left behind in time. How can you find that divine beauty in the transient objects of this world?

Astrairupaattamashibhih kuchakunkumaani tasthurbrijantya urudukhabharaah sma tooshneem.

(10. 29. 29)

When Shri Krishna told the gopis to go back to their homes, they experienced intense distress. Then they gave a wonderful affirmation of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Maivam vibhoarhati bhavaan gaditum nrishansam.

(10. 23.29)

The gopis said, 'the first point is that what You say is not worthy of You. When a person says what is appropriate and suited to his status, it is accepted.'

If a Sadhu uses foul language he must be told, 'Maharaj, your speech does you no credit.' If a Devta speaks a lie it leads to his utter ruin. The gopis told Shri Krishna, 'This is not appropriate for You to say – *nrishansam* – it is cruel.'

Then the gopis gave a description of Dharma.

Yatpatyapatya – suhridaamanuvrittiranga streenaam svadharma iti dharmavidaa tvayottam,

astve`vame`tadupade`shapade` tvayeeshe` pre`shtho bhavaamstanubritaam kila bandhuraatmaa.

(10. 29. 32)

The highest Dharma is to have prema for the Paramatma who is our *antaryamee* (the one who abides within the heart), who is our *pratyagatmaa* (the Atma in us), who has manifested in the form of Shri Krishna.'

It was not easy for the gopis to renounce their worldly Dharma – they were not influenced by Western culture! '*Dustyajam svajanamaaryapatham cha*' – it was extremely hard for them to give up their duties and families, because of the sanskara of these were in their blood. However, their vidya, their buddhi, their prema –

*Veekshyaalakaavritamukham tava kundalashreegandasthalaadharasudham
hasitaavalokam,*

*dattaabhayam cha bhujadandayugam vilokya vakshah shriyaikaramanam cha
bhavaam daasyah.*

(10. 29. 39)

(My Beloved, we have become Your slaves, sustained by Your beautiful face, hair, etc. Your arms are generous in granting protection and making Your bhaktas free of fear. Your chest is the resting place of Laxmi.)

This is the state of the gopis.

After this comes the *vihaara* (pleasure; recreation) with Shri Krishna. This, too, is described.

Sishe`va aatmanyavaruddhasauratah.

(10. 33. 26)

(Many nights were merged into that beautiful moonlight night of Bhagwan's leela that was pure consciousness.)

Re`me`rame`sho vrajasundareebhih yathaaarbhakah syapratibimbavibhramah.

(10. 33. 26)

Bhagwan is doing vihar with the gopis; He is doing the Raas leela with them. It has a wonderful meaning. One point is that kama cannot touch Shri Krishna. The second point is that kama cannot touch the gopis.

Kaame`na pooritah kaamah sansaaram janaye`t sfutam.

When kama is fulfilled by indulging in kama, is when the sansara is created, but when kama is fulfilled by the *nishkaama* (free of kama) the sansara is not created.

Kriyaa sarvaapi saivaatra param kaamo navidyate`.

All the actions are the same, but actions are external whereas kama is internal. An ocean of rasa was heaving here, but there was no feeling of *bhoktaa* (the enjoyer) and the *bhogyaa* (the object that is enjoyed). Surdasji has written:

Sadaa e`ka rasa e`ka akhandita aadi anaadi svaroopaa,

koti kalapa beetata nahin jaanata biharata jugalasvaroopaa.

Shri Radha-Krishna are one rasa, undivided, without beginning or end, and incomparable. They take pleasure in themselves, unaware of the passing of eons of time. They are one essence in two forms.

Dhruvdasji has written:

Na aadi na anta bihaara karain dou,

laala priyaame`n bhayee na chindaaree.

Lala and His Beloved (Radha) are not separate. They are the eternal Tattva that has no beginning and no end. Their vihar is eternal.

They have not met, but the eternal vihar goes on. It is like the vihar of pure consciousness in pure consciousness, and pure anand in pure anand.

What is a gopi? She is anand. What is Shri Krishna? He is anand. An ocean of anand exists. One wave rises on the right, and one on the left. One is Radha and the other is Krishna. They merge. The left wave goes to the right and the right goes to the left. Radha becomes Krishna, and Krishna becomes Radha. Then they

merge again and Krishna becomes Radha and Radha becomes Krishna! This is how they break their forms and do vihar.

Naradji Maharaj has called this '*tri-roopa-bhangapoorvakam*' (breaking into three forms). In them there is no difference of the *rasika* (one who savors the sweetness) and the *rasa* (the sweetness) and the *rasya* (that, which is sweet); and the vihar goes on. The *rasika* becomes the *rasa* and the *rasa* becomes the *rasya*, and the *rasya* becomes the *rasika*. Vihar is not possible with the feeling of man-woman. The difference of *bhokya* and *bhogy* vanishes.

Baahuprasaaparirambhakaraalakoruneevee
stanaalabhananarmanaravaagraapaataih,

—

kshve`lyaavalokahasitairvrajasundareenaamuttambhayan
ramayanchakaara.

ratipatim

(10. 29. 46)

Kama was stultified. There was no impulse of kama in Shri Krishna Himself; no kama, no whiff of kama.

An extraordinary thing happened then. From the viewpoint of the Bhakti-rasa, it is unique!

While dancing with Shri Krishna the gopis' attention shifted to themselves. What happened then? Just as *upadrava* (turmoil) was created when Yashoda's drishti went to Putana, and the gwala baal had to go into Aghasura's stomach when their drishti shifted to Aghasura's beauty, there was turmoil when the gopis' drishti shifted from Shri Krishna on to themselves.

When Maiya or the gwala baal thought of any other, there would be no *baadhaa* (obstacle; barrier) in their prema-Dharma. The gopis' attention, however, never goes to any other – not to Putana, Shatakasura, Trinavarta, or the beauty of the forest – that kind of *vighna* (obstacle) never comes in the life of any gopi.

Just see the subtlety of the vighna! The obstacle of looking at any other form is not present in the life of a gopi. It is there in Yashoda's life, and also in the life of

the gwala baal. Their drishti does move away from Shri Krishna occasionally. The drishti of the gopis never leaves Shri Krishna!

Then, what happened now?

It is the vighna of *sva-darshan* (looking at one's self). See the depth of their prema! Here, even thinking about themselves was a vighna in the pristine prema of the gopis.

Why did their focus shift from their Beloved on to themselves? Oh, your Beloved is looking at you! When your Beloved is looking at you, why do you look at yourselves? Look at your Beloved!

There is an *ananyataa* (no other) in prema, a *vrata* (self-imposed austerity). In this, if a person becomes a drashta like a Yogi who blocks his thoughts, or does vivek as in the Sankhya Darshan, it is an impediment in prema. The feeling of a drashta has to be given up for the sake of prema.

In prema a person gladly gives up his feeling of being a drashta, for the sake of the priyatam. He throws it to the ground and dances on it! Where is prema, if the feeling of drashta and drishya remains? Where is Gnan if these feelings are allowed to continue?

Brahma-bodha (comprehensive understanding of the Brahman) is not possible unless these differences are eliminated. The feeling of being separate from the priyatam is an obstacle even in experiencing the rasa of the Brahman.

Aatmaanam me`nire` streenaam maaninyoabhyadhikam bhuvi.

(10. 29. 47)

The gopis got *maana* (pride). Maana is a stone. It is *jadataa* (to lack consciousness). It is an impediment even in experiencing worldly rasa.

For example, if you ask someone to go with you to watch an interesting match, and he replies, 'I? Go to watch a game? No thank you!' he will miss the pleasure of watching a good game. Such a person misses out even on ordinary pleasures.

This Aham (ego, the feeling of individuality) is a cause of great dukha.

When the gopis' focus shifted from Shri Krishna to themselves, Shri Krishna thought, 'Your eyes are not on Me; they are looking at yourselves. Very well; gopis, you can go into a Samadhi for a little while. Block your thoughts. Look at yourself. Since you don't want to look at Me – since you choose to look at yourselves instead – I am going.'

This is viraha! When the gopis started to think about themselves they were no longer able to see Shri Krishna.

The Yogis say that this is the highest state – to see no other. The bhaktas say that this state is higher than the state of people engrossed in worldly matters, but it makes a person turned away from Shri Krishna, because in this state the focus is not on Him.

Shri Krishna became *antardhyaana* (invisible).

Some people say that the drishya (world we see) is everything; the Atma is nothing. This is the principle of the Charvaks. Some people say that the Atma-drishti (seeing everything as the Atma) is the greatest stage; there is no need to see the drishya. Some people say that neither the Aham nor the idam (this; everything that is not the Atma) are real.

The principle of the bhaktas is that it is Bhagwan who frolics in the form of both the Aham and the idam. Don't focus on the Aham to an extent where the idam is no longer seen; and don't focus on the idam so you don't see the Aham at all.

Come; enjoy being with Bhagwan. Do *vilaasa* (flirt) with Him!

When Bhagwan disappeared the drishya became visible. Now, the gopis began to ask the trees, shrubs and creepers, and the animals and birds, if they had seen which way Shri Krishna had gone. They became *krishnamaya* (filled with Krishna; identifying with Krishna), and – '*aatmaanam me`nire` streenaam maaninyoabhyadhikam bhuvi*' – began to do leela as Shri Krishna had done.

Then, they saw the footprints of Shri Krishna.

Shri Krishna was in His *yugala svaroopā* (dual form, with Radha). This knowledge aroused no jealousy in the gopis. In spite of knowing that Shri Krishna had left them and gone off with one gopi, no feeling of envy arose in their heart. There was no feeling of hatred or competition. Their Aham left them, envy left them, and then –

Tanmanaskā – stadaalāpā – staviche`shatā – stadaatmkatāh,

tadgunaane`va gaayantyo naatmaagaaraani sasmaruh.

(10. 30. 44)

They forgot everything, and then their mind was filled with nothing but Krishna. They began to sing the *gopee-geeta* (the song of the gopis). A unique feeling is revealed in the Gopi Geet. It is far beyond any worldly prema.

Yatte`sujaatacharanaamburuham stane`shu bheetaah shanaih priya dadheemahi karkashe`shu,

te`naataveematasi tad vyathate` na kinsvit koorpaadibhirbhramati dheerbhavadaayushaam nah.

(10. 31. 19)

‘We feel that if we place Your feet on our chest, it will give You pleasure. We are impelled to do this because we want to give pleasure to You. At the same time, we feel afraid, because Your feet are so tender that they may get hurt by the touch of our hard chest. Our mana is filled with doubt even when we wish to do something that gives You pleasure.’

This is called *mahaa-bhaava* – extreme love. It is the intense desire to give sukha to the priyatam, accompanied by fear that some involuntary mistake may cause dukha instead of pleasure. The gopis don’t want sukha for themselves; they want only to give sukha to Shri Krishna. Their only fear is that some dukha may come to Him.

Te`naataveematasi tad vyathate` na kinsvit,

koorpaadibhirbhramati dheerbhavadaayushaam nah.

The gopis say, 'You wander in Vrindavan with these feet. The very thought of a thorn pricking them makes us feel giddy. You are our *aayu* (longevity). You are our jeevan, and our buddhi wanders here and there only for You.' This is the Mahabhava in the life of the gopis.

When Shri Krishna appeared before the gopis they placed three points before Him.

1. There are some people who have prema for the person who has prema for them.
2. There are some people who have prema even if the other person does not have prema for them.
3. There are some people who have prema for neither the person who has prema, nor for the one who doesn't.

Which is the most superior of the three?

Bhajatoanubhajantye`ka e`ka e`tadviparyayam,

nobhayaanshcha bhajantye`ka e`tanno broohi saadhu bhoh.

(10. 32. 16)

Tomorrow I will tell the about the answer Shri Krishna gave.

Hare`rnivaasaatmagunaih ramaakreedamabhoonnripa pravachanano.

(10. 5. 18)

Bhagwan's *saannidhya* (proximity; presence) is there in Mathura – '*bhagavaan yatra nityam sannihito harih*' – on the other side is the Brahmahrid (the name of a lake) where Bhagwan gives His Vaikuntha darshan to Akrura and the people of Vraja.

The third place is the Yamuna in which Bhagwan Shri Radha-Krishna do vihar. There is the *agni* (fire) that Shri Krishna drinks up. There is the defeat of both Devtas and Asuras. Trinavarta is the dosha in the *vaayu* (the air), meaning, a misuse of the power of the wind. Bhagwan purifies it. Vyomasura is the dosha in the *aakaasha* (space); Bhagwan purifies it. He makes them bhagavats. Even the trees here are bhagavats. They have *romaancha* – their body thrills in the presence of Shri Krishna.

Aspandanam gatimataam pulakastaroonaam.

(10. 21. 19)

Yad go dvijadrumamrigaah pulakaanya bibrana.

Shri Krishna's darshan, touch, and *smarana* (thinking of Him) thrill even the trees in Vraja. It is described how even the dust is *pre`mamaya* (filled with prema). Brahmaji wants this dust to fall on him. Uddhavji wants this dust to fall on him. Madhuvana (the part of the forest where Shri Radha-Krishna frolicked together) is known to all of you. The word *madhu-bhoomi* (the land of sweetness) is used in the Vedas.

Aummadhu vaataa ritaayate` madhuksharanti sindhavah, maadhveernah santvaushadheeh, madhunakttamutoshaso, madhumat paarthivam rajah.

Everything there has the sweetness of nectar. This is the place for Bhagwan's aradhana. Here, there is only anand, only prema.

Jahaan pre`ma hee pre`makee srishtee mile` chalo naava ko le` chale`n khe`ke` vahaan.

(Let us row our boat to the place where only prema exists.)

Here, there is no *shoka* (sorrow), no *moha* (deluded worldly thinking), no *bhaya* (fear), no *bhrama* (false understanding), no *jaraa* (old age) and no *mrityu* (death). Where Bhagwan is, there is no sorrow. In such a Vrajabhoomi, the gopi is the *dhvajaa* (flag; banner) of prema.

Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj has said that Bhagwan had to manifest all His beauty to make the gopis His own. He had to manifest His full sweetness and prema. Bhagwan did not conceal anything of Himself before the gopis.

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said that the gopis' prema was so strong that Shri Krishna was compelled to manifest before them. You people would be reading the Westernized books on prema. That is merely love; it is not prema! It is *pre`maabhaasa* – an illusion of prema. The bhoomi of prema is Vraja. It is the bhoomi of anand!

You will remember what I told you yesterday about the three points the gopis spoke of, asking Shri Krishna which kind was the most superior.

1. To have prema for the one who has prema.
2. To have prema for even the one who doesn't have prema.
3. To have no prema for both the one who has prema and the one who does not have prema.

This was after Shri Krishna had disappeared for some time and then reappeared before the gopis. He was trying hard to cajole them.

I was telling you some points about prema. Prema is sweet surrender, where there is such sweetness that the Ishwara forgets His *eeshvarataa* (being the Ishwara) and a Raja forgets that he is a Raja, a leader forgets that he is a leader, a Brahmin forgets he is a Brahmin – not through any worldly compulsion, but because there is sweetness even in being helpless before the priyatam.

The state where even helplessness seems sweet has been described by the Mahapurushas – ‘*madhura vaivashye`pre`masvaroopam`*’ – the swarup of prema is to experience sweetness in feeling helpless before the loved one. The indication of the gopis was, ‘You left us and became antardhyana – this is lack of prema on Your part.’

Krishna’s response was, ‘A person who loves the person who has prema for him is a *vyaapaaree* (trader; businessman).’

I once saw, at Vrindavan, how little puppies started licking the syrup off a leaf cup someone had thrown after eating the rasagulla in which the shopkeeper gave it. When they had licked it clean they began to lick their own muzzles for the syrup that stuck to it. After that, they began to lick each other’s muzzles, to lick the sweetness from the area their tongues couldn’t reach! This is also prema, but it is the prema of puppies! I have seen children who love to have their faces licked by their pet dogs, but this is about children. I have also seen adults who do this, but let us not talk about them!

So, when someone has prema for the person who has prema for him, it is called *svaarthartham taddhi naanyathaa* – that is *svaatha* (self-interest).

The second is to have prema even when the other person does not have prema. Some people say that parents have prema for their children, even when the children don’t love them. The Sants (Mahatmas) have prema even for those who have no prema for them.

Mahatmas are like the elements. Fire gives warmth, the sun gives light, the moon gives moonlight, etc, regardless of who benefits. Similarly, if a person’s *svabhaava* (nature) is prema, he will shower prema even on those who have no prema for him. Thus, the prema of the gopis was greater.

The gopis asked, ‘What about the one who has no prema for either, Krishna?’

‘*Aatmaaraamaa aaptakaamaa akritagnaa gurudruhah*. These are the four types of people who do not have prema for both: those who have prema and those who don’t have prema.

An atmaram is a person who has achieved Samadhi. An aptakama is an Atmagnani who desires nothing, even though he interacts in the world. A person who has no gratitude is a kritaghna. A person who has committed a great offence is a gurudruha.'

The gopis looked at each other in confusion. Which of these did Krishna belong to? 'Not the first, nor the second. Shri Krishna does not go into a Samadhi, nor is He a Tattvagnani; He steals butter and flirts with us. It is not that He is not aware of our prema for Him; He is not ungrateful. In that case, He is a gurudruha – He is a person who has committed a great offence, because He has no prema for us, in spite of the prema we have for Him.'

Shri Krishna explained the *rahasya* (secret; quintessence) of prema to the gopis. 'Gopis, I know how much prema there is in your heart for Me.

Naaham tu sakhyo bhajatoapi jantoon bhajaamyameeshaa – manuvritti – vrittaye`,

yathaaghano labdhadhane` vinashte` tachchintayaanyannibrito na ve`da.

(10. 32. 20)

Gopis I do not have the extent of prema for those who have prema for Me as I should have. The reason is, because I want their chitta vritti to be focused on Ma more intensely.

There was a poor man. He had no wealth. But he managed to eke out a comfortable living and he lived quite happily. One day he got a lot of money. He was overjoyed. He developed a passionate love for money. Some days later, a thief came and stole the money. The man was devastated. He beat his chest in despair.

People tried to comfort him. "You lived quite happily before you got the money," they said. "Just as lack of wealth did not make you unhappy earlier, you can again be happy even if the money is gone."

“No, my friend,” replied the man, “my heart has become attached to wealth now.”

When I met you, gopis,’ said Shri Krishna, ‘and then I disappeared for a little while, I came closer to your chitta. Your buddhi became *mad-aakaara* (took on My form; identified with Me). Gopis, for My sake you gave up this *loka* (world), you gave up the Vedas (the rules of Dharma prescribed by the Vedas), and you gave up your *svajana* (nearest and dearest).

E`vam madarthojjhitlokave`dasvaanaam hi vo mayyanuvrittaye`abalaah,

mayaa paroksham bhajataa tirohitam maasooyitum maarhatha tat priyam priyaah.

Na paaraye`aham niravadyasanyujaam svasaadhukrityam bibudhaayushaapi vah, yaa maabhajan durjarage`hashrinkhalaah sanvrishchya tadvah pratiyaatu saadhunaa.

(10. 32. 21 - 22)

Gopis, when you walked, I walked behind you, applying the dust of your feet to My head. You were looking for Me. You were distraught. I was amidst you, hidden under an *oodhanee* (cloth with which the gopis covered their heads). I could feel the intensity of your prema for Me. I marveled at the depth of your prema!

The Shastra of prema is different. It has a sweet helplessness. This is its special characteristic, before which even the Ishwara stands with folded hands. So, gopis, for My sake you gave up this loka. You left your *svajana*. You left everything and had prema for Me alone. However, when I ask Myself if I can give up this loka and paraloka, and My *svajana*, and have prema only for you, I know I cannot do it for even one day!

If I were to stop giving the paraloka which is the fruit of Dharma, paraloka will be destroyed. I am compelled to think about the loka-paraloka of people. I have to have prema for My bhaktas. Thousands of water lilies have prema for the Chandrama, but can the Chandrama confine its prema for any one of them?

Thousands of *chakora* (a kind of bird that feeds on moonbeams) are thirsty for the Chandrama, but can the Chandrama ever repay the love of the chakor?

Anuvrajaamyaham nityam pooyaye`tyanghrire`nubhih.

I am the *rinee* (debtor) of My premis. That is why I walk behind them, to get the dust of their feet on My head.'

Bhoga is not called prema, nor is giving bhoga called prema. Prema does have bhoga, but the viewpoint is to give sukha to the priyatam. There is also abstinence in bhoga, but – *tasminstu tat sukhe` sukhitvam* – it is the nature of prema; a characteristic of prema; to be sukhi in the sukha of the priyatam. And, if sukha is in snatching something from the priyatam, what then? Then, the premi should snatch it! There is prema even n taking, not just in giving.

One Mahatma was invited to a Mutt in Vrindavan, but when he came he found the front door shut, with a padlock. He told his servants to break open the lock. They went inside. The mahatma told his people, 'Go and see where the kitchen and stores are. Cook some food.' A little later, a messenger came to say that the Mahant (head of the Mutt) had gone to a distant place, and had been delayed. He was on his way. When the Mahant reached the Ashram and saw the situation, he began to dance with joy. 'You have considered this Mutt to be your own, Maharaj!' he said.

You see, there is no *sankeernataa* (narrowness of outlook) in the drishti of prema. The objects of the world are like the dirt one washes off the hands.

Shri Krishna did vihar with the gopis. Vihar is not possible unless there is a *saamaanya* (equality). If one person is small and the other greater, the smaller does *se`vaa* (renders service) of the greater. That is not called prema. Prema is from both sides. The prema of the saras birds is not true prema, because they are always immersed in the joy of togetherness. They don't know the dukha of *viyoga* (separation). A person who has not experienced the dukha of viyoga is unable to gauge the sukha of *sanyoga* (togetherness).

And, the chakravak birds do not know the true meaning of prema, because they know only the pain of viyoga; they have no experience of the sukha of sanyoga. Prema is where the dukha of viyoga is present even in the sukha of sanyoga, and the sukha of sanyoga is present even in the dukha of viyoga.

Prema is not physical union. It is a merging of the mana, a union of the Atma where *dvaita* (duality) is destroyed. Prema is something that destroys the veil that separates. It tears away the curtain that conceals.

In prema a premi says, 'I did not wear a necklace because it would come in between us in union.' Even this distance of physical thrilling is unbearable. The separation caused by garments and ornaments, and separate *monovritti* (mental inclinations) is intolerable. Prema cannot endure separate *ahankaara* (subtle pride of individuality). Prema is where two entities merge and become one.

*Yaah pashyanti priyam svapne`dhanyaastaah sakhi yoshitaah,
asmaakam tu gate`krishne`gataa nidraapi vairinee.*

'Those who see You in their dreams are blessed, Krishna! We are not even able to sleep since You went.'

Maha Raas.

Prema creates *samarasya* (mutual feeling). It creates harmony. There are three types of *mandala* (circles) in the Maha Raas (the great dance of Shri Krishna with the gopis). There are many gopis and one Krishna. It is described that Shri Krishna dances with such speed that every gopi thinks that He is dancing in front of her. He is one and the gopis are many, yet each gopis gets the feeling that Shri Krishna is dancing with her. It is one Krishna, dancing with thousands of gopis.

Then, Krishna multiplies His form. There are two gopis dancing in a circle, with one Krishna in between. After that there is one Krishna with one gopi. Shri Radha-Krishna dance in the center. They are encircled by the gopis as described.

The rising of one vritti and its fading, and the *sandhi-sthala* (meeting point) that connects them – the *saamaanya chaitanya* (consciousness in both) – is the *aadhyaatmika* (spiritual) significance with which the Raas is done.

The *vishaya vastu* (object of the senses) of which the Tattva (essence) cannot be defined is nothing but *vinod* (frivolity). Where there is no darshan (philosophy) there is no Dharma. Where there is no darshan there is no *antaranga anubhooti* (spiritual experience).

Our prema is a Darshan. It is the philosophy of the oneness in the two. It tears away the *kosha* (imaginary sheaths that cover the Atma within) – the *annamaya kosha* (the sheath made of food; the gross body), the *praanamaya kosha* (the sheath of the prana that activates the body and mind), the *manomaya kosha* (the sheath of desires), the *vignaanamaya kosha* (the sheath of the intellect that discerns and governs) and the *aanandamaya kosha* (the sheath of anand). Then the oneness of the Parameshwara and the jeeva is experienced. That is where the Paramatma abides.

There is no *vaanee* (speech) in the prema of the gopis; there is prema. It is said that Shri Krishna never takes the name of Shri Radha, and she never takes His name either. This is one viewpoint. Earlier, it was the tradition that a husband and wife did not take the name of their spouse, whether they had prema or not! Prema is not something to be expressed verbally.

Pre`maadvayo rasikayorapi deepa e`va hrivyoma bhaasayati nishchala e`sha bhaati,

dvaaraadayam vadanatastu bahirgatashche`d niryati shaantimathavaa tanutaamupaiti.

Prema is a lamp that burns in the temple of the hriday. If it comes out through the doorway of the mouth it either reduces or goes out. This lamp is to be kept in the hriday with great care; it is not to be exposed to chatter in a party, or on the roadside. It is a treasure of the temple of the heart. It is a priceless gem – a diamond – hidden wealth. It is to be kept hidden.

Parama dhana raadhe`naama aadhhara.

(The name of Radha is the supreme wealth.)

Shri Krishna is *mauna* (silent) in prema. Just as the Brahman is not an object of the vani – it cannot be defined verbally – prema is also something that has to be felt.

Now, another viewpoint is that there is no *abhimaana* (subtle pride of individuality) in prema. A person says, ‘I am a Brahmagnani’. Gnan is a vritti, and the jeeva is the *abhimaanee* (one who has abhiman) of Gnan. The fellow has the abhiman of Gnan and calls himself the Brahman! That is a complete fallacy! In the same way, a premi never says, ‘I am a premi.’

Na kshodeeyaan sakshi mama punah pre`magandho mukunde`,

krandanteem maam nijasubhagataakhyaapanaaya prateehi.

Khe`ladvanshee – valayinamanaalokya tam vakrabimbam,

dhvastaalambaa yadaharah haapraanakeetaan vibharmi.

Shri Radha says, ‘Sakhi, there is not even a whiff of prema for Shri Krishna in my heart. When I weep and cry out His name, I am only advertising my good fortune to people. The very fact that I am still alive without seeing Shyam Sunder’s beautiful face filled with love, His eyebrows that shower Grace, the flute at His lips, and the smile that fills me with anand, is proof that I have no real prema for Him. I am keeping my prema alive even though my heart is being bitten by worms. Yet you say that I am a *pre`mikaa* (a lady who loves)! I have not even imagined, properly, what prema actually is!’

Please think about the level of *tyaaga* (sacrifice; renunciation) there is in prema, and how great its capacity, because it establishes Bhagwan’s rules of Dharma as adharma! I told you this – the statements of the priyatam Shri Krishna, became adharma; and the statements of the premi gopis became Dharma! A *raagee* (one who has attachment) made a *virakta* (person with detachment) a raagi! A jeeva made the Ishwara a jeeva! A *parichhinna* (separate individual) placed the *poorna* (complete; undivided) on the palm of her hand – this is the capacity of prema!

In prema the premi does not have to remember the priyatam. A mother may forget to give her child a glass of milk; a premi, however, has to make an effort to stop thinking about the priyatam! There is a description of the gopis:

*Yaa dohane`avahane` mathanopale`papre`nkhe`khanaarbharudito
kshanamaarjanaadau,*

*gaayanti chainamanuraktadhiyoashrukanthayo dhanyaa vrajastriya
urukramachintayaanaah.*

These women of Vraja are blessed, who, while milking the cows direct the stream of milk into Krishna's mouth. When they pound the grain to remove the chaff, Shri Krishna helps them. He comes and sits opposite them at the grinding stones, and helps them when they grind the wheat.

There was an eighty year old woman in Vrindavan. Every morning she would grind fresh flour and make rotis. She would feed every Sadhu who passed by her door. I have also eaten her rotis. Some ten or twenty Sadhus got rotis from her every day. At times, she would bring rotis for me. I asked her, 'Maiya, how are you able to grind the flour you are so frail!'

'Baanka pyaara! Baankaa pyaaraa (the dear Banka)! she said. She was referring to the form of Shri Krishna in the famous Banke Behari Mandir. Her rotis had a flavor of their own. 'When I sit at the grinding stone He also comes and sits, to help me,' she explained. 'My hands no longer have the strength they once had. After all, I'm an old woman of eighty now!' She was bent, needing a stick to support her as she walked. Her body shook with weakness. And yet, she cooked rotis of about three or four kilos of flour every morning!

So, Shri Krishna helped the gopis to pound the grain. He helped them to pull water from the well, and smear gobar on the floor. The gopis would forget their domestic chores. They said, 'Send Krishna out of the house! Send Him out of our mana! He makes it impossible for us to do any work!'

Naradji came to Vrindavan one day. He saw a gopi sitting in an *aasana* (Yogic posture) on the bank of the Yamunaji. She was doing dhyana. ‘Well, young lady,’ he said, ‘are you doing dhyana of Shri Krishna?’

‘Baba, please don’t even take His name!’ she exclaimed. ‘Because of Him I could do no work at home today. Whatever work I try to do, He comes and stands in front of me! I am doing *praanaayaama* (yogic breath control exercises) to control my mind. I want to stop thinking of Him! I am doing this to throw Him out of my chitta; not to remember Him!’

Pratyaahrityamunih kshanam vishayato yasmin mano dhitsate` baale`yam vishaye`shu dhitsati pratyaaaharantee manah,

yasya sfoortilavaaya hanta hridaye` yogee samutkanthate` mugdhe`yam kila tasya chaasya hridayannishkraantimaakaankshati.

So many great ascetics do pranayam with the wish to meditate on Krishna, and this simple-minded rustic gopi does pranayam to put Him out of her mana! This is prema!

Where there is prema there is no narrowness of outlook, and there is no hesitation. Where prema is, tyaga is there, and there is *nirabhimaana* (absence of pride). There is also *mauna* (staying silent), and a continuous memory of the priyatam.

There are many kinds of prema – prema with the predominance of *vishvaasa* (faith; confidence), prema with the predominance of *maitree* (friendship), prema with the predominance of offering one’s self, ‘I belong to You,’ prema with the predominance of possessiveness, ‘You are mine,’ etc.

In this prema, sometimes there is an exchange of shaaps! In the Brahmavarta Purana, and also some other Puranas, there is an episode where Radharani gets upset with Shri Krishna. ‘You have come after being dukhi,’ she said. ‘I recognize the signs. What made You dukhi? You got dukha because You left me and went elsewhere.’

Radharani knows – she has vishwas – that Shri Krishna cannot be sukhi without her. ‘He is dukhi because He did not come to my house today.’ She never feels that He went to some other place to get sukha. The thought that Shri Krishna may have sought sukha elsewhere never occurs to Radharani!

Let me tell you about another episode. Thoughts like this are given in the Sampradaya of Vallabha Acharya. A Sakhi came and complained to Radharani, ‘Swamini, I saw Shri Krishna going to Chandravali’s house today.’

Shri Krishna goes to everybody’s house – this is His swarup! There is no thought of a *kanyaa* (maiden), *vivaahitaa* (married woman), *yuvatee* (young woman) or *vridddhaa* (old woman) involved. All jeevas are entitled to have prema for Shri Krishna, regardless of their state. I can tell you some amazing things provided you don’t take them in the wrong spirit.

Shri Roop Goswami has written – as an example of *haasya rasa* (the rasa of humor) – that one gopi was telling another about her mother-in-law. ‘She is such an old woman – her breasts hang like bottle gourds! She needs a stick to walk, and yet – just see the *kaajala* (lamp-black used to decorate the eyes) she has applied! Look at the way she swings as she walks! She says, “I will not fail to entice Shri Krishna today!” ‘

The purport is that every being has the right to have prema for Shri Krishna. There is no obstacle of any kind in this. Kubja (a hunchback woman in Mathura) also has prema for Him.

So, the Sakhi came and told Radharani about Shri Krishna going to Chandravali’s house. I will tell you what Radharani said.

*Sakhi he`chara charatu yathe`shtam, vaamo vaa dakshino vaa bhavatu,
shvaasa iva pre`yaan me`, gataagataih jeevayatye`va.*

‘Sakhi, let Him go wherever He wants. He may be pleased with me or displeased with me; walk to my left or walk to my right. Let His behavior be favorable or against me. He is my prana. He is the breath that keeps me alive. He is the purpose of my life, even when His behavior is contrary. His coming and even His

going gives meaning to my life. Whatever His lifestyle, it is the purpose of my being alive.'

That means prema does not have the drishti of materialism. Prema does not see whether the priyatam is favorably disposed or not. There is no dosha-drishti in prema.

The famous poet Rasakhan has given a wonderful characteristic of prema.

*Binu guna yauvana roopa dhana, binu svaaratha hita jaani,
suddha kaamanaa tein rahita, pre`ma vahai rasakhaana.*

(Prema is free of considerations of virtues, youth, beauty or wealth. It is unselfish; it wants only the good of the priyatam. It has no desire for personal gratification. This is prema, in the opinion of Rasakhan.)

This prema is always seen in the life of the gopis. Uddhavaji said – *bhaktih pravartitaa dishtyaa muninaamapi durlabhaa* – this is rarely found even in great ascetics.

There are two drishtis even in this.

1. The viewpoint of Shri Vallabhacharyaji Maharaj is that the *jaati* (caste) of the gopis was not a high caste. Their *aachaara* (habits; behavior) were not lofty; nor did they have Gnan. Even so, Bhagwan Shri Krishna accepted their prema and made Himself totally theirs in that prema.
2. Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is of the opinion that the gopis are the Acharyas of prema. '*Bhaktih pravartitaa dishtyaa muninaamapi durlabhaa*' are the words spoken by Uddhavaji. The bhakti of the gopis was difficult for even great Rishi-Munis to obtain. Other kinds of Bhakti are pierced by *sanmaatraa* (pure existence; substance), meaning, it has karma and Samadhi. External karmas are *nishkaama* (free of worldly desires) karmas and *sakaama* (having worldly desires) karmas. Internal karmas are for attaining Samadhi.

So, should we go on doing prema until we become immersed in it, and go into Samadhi?

No! No! That is not prema. In prema sinking and rising up is of no importance. Both are part of prema.

The opinion of the Vedantis is that prema is pierced by the *chid* (pure consciousness). It contains only Gnan, only pure effulgence.

Gnan, too, is seen in the life of the gopis.

Na khalu gopikaanandano bhavaanakhilade`hinaamantaraatmadrik.

(You are not only the son of a gopi. You are the Atma who abides in the heart of all beings.)

Adhyaatma shikshana gopyaa e`vam krishne`na shikshitaah,

tadanusmaranadhvastajeevakoshaastamadhyagan.

(10. 82. 48)

(Shri Krishna gave the gopis the teaching of Adhyatma. The gopis' feeling of being a jeeva was dispelled by thinking repeatedly about this teaching. They became one with Him.)

However, even Gnan is not very important in prema. Karma and karma-shanti (worldly activities and withdrawing from worldly activities) have no importance in prema either. Prema is a rasa, a simple sweet emotion. That is why, '*muninaamapi durlabhaa, ke`valam gnaananishthaanaamapi durlabhaa* – the rasa of pristine Bhakti is difficult for even great ascetics to obtain. Having staunch faith in Gnan alone is not enough.'

Here, *shringaara* (romantic prema) is greater than tyaga, and the experience of this rasa is greater than the experience of Samadhi. Even *jadataa* (becoming stupefied) is greater than Gnan in prema! In prema even a quarrel is greater than shanti and *maana* (wanting to be cajoled) is greater than *amaana* (humility). This is the glory of prema.

*Anganaamanganaamaantare` maadhavo maadhavam maadhavam
chaantare`naanganaa,*

*itthamaakalpite` mandale`madhyagah sanjagauve`nunaam
de`vakeenandanah.*

One gopi one Krishna, one gopi one Krishna – playing the flute.

The quarrel between the Shaivas and the Vaishnavas started only after the two famous Acharyas of South India – Shri Kantha Acharya and Shri Ramanuja Acharya wrote commentaries on the Bhagwat. Before that there was no dispute whatsoever between the worshippers of Shiva and Vishnu. The followers of Kanthacharya say that Shri Ramanujacharya stole Shri Kanthacharya's commentary and presented the thoughts as his own. The followers of Shri Ramanujacharya say that it was Shri Kanthacharya who stole Shri Ramanujacharyaji's thoughts. It is not good that they accuse each others' Gurus of plagiarism, but see the good point that emerges from this argument: had both Acharyas not been of the same opinion, how would they have written the same thoughts? Both Acharyas held the principle of Vishsta Advaita!

The Valmiki Ramayana states that all the people of Ayodhya worshipped Shankarji, and all the people in Mithila were Shankarji's bhaktas. Every home had the puja of Shankar Bhagwan. Goswami Tulsidasji Maharaj says that all the people did upasana of the *pancha-devtaa* (the five Devtas) and the puja of a clay form of Shivaji. What more need I say about the Vaishnavas?

Even in the Bhagwat there is a tradition – you can look it up for yourself. Immediately after the five chapters of the Raas Panchadhyayi, and the conclusion of the Raas leela, all the people of Vraja went to do Shankarji's puja in the Ambika Vana. They travelled there, took a bath, and did daan. They did the puja of Shankarji and the Devi. They spent the night there.

There was an *ajagara* (python) who was actually a Gandharva. He had been turned into an ajgar because of a shaap. He lived in the Ambika Vana. He came there. Bhagwan touched him with His foot and gave him Mukti.

Yugal Geet.

After that comes the episode of the Yugal Geet (a song sung by two). In this world there are very few who get the *sanyoga* (meeting) with Bhagwan; and many have the *viyoga* (pain of separation) of Bhagwan. The Yugal Geet tells us how we should spend our time in His viyoga.

Vaamabaahukritavaamakapolo valgitabhruradharaarpitave`num,

komalaangulibhiraashritamaarge`, gopya eerayati yatra mukundah.

(10. 35. 2)

The gopis spent their time talking about Shri Krishna's beauty, His habits, etc while He was away grazing the cows.

Akrura.

Akrura is also a bhagavat. The surprising thing is that he is sent by Kansa, to bring Shri Krishna to Mathura. If someone goes towards Shri Krishna – even if he is prompted by *ahankaara* (pride; arrogance) – he can become a bhagavat. A vain man may say, 'I will have a great temple built', or, 'I will do such a puja as no one else has seen.' Even such pride can take someone towards Bhagwan, and Bhagwan is like the sun! No lamp, however bright, can match the effulgence of the sun. Ahankara pales when faced with Bhagwan.

As he travelled towards Vrindavan, Akrura began to imagine how Bhagwan would greet him. He imagined Bhagwan greeting him with loving words of welcome. Just then he noticed Bhagwan's footprints on the ground. He jumped down from the *ratha* (chariot).

Rathaadavaskandya sa te`shvache`shtata.

(10. 38. 26)

Akrura jumped down from his ratha and began to roll on the ground, on Bhagwan's footprints, to get the purifying dust of Bhagwan's feet on his body.

This is a point about the destruction of ahankara that an envoy of Kansa rolls on the imprints of Bhagwan's feet.

Foolish people have ahankara about their wealth, good looks, etc. They consider others to be inferior. Oh, nothing will go with you at the end!

There was a Sadhu who had collected twenty four gold coins during his lifetime. When he was dying he decided he would take the guineas with him. He cooked *halwa* (a thick pudding made with flour) and swallowed the coins with the halwa wrapped round them. When he died, his disciples began to quarrel over the missing coins. After the Sadhu's body was burnt, the twenty four gold coins were found among the ashes. The disciples decided to have a *bhandaaraa* (feast for Sadhus) for their Guru, by selling the coins to meet the expenses.

At the time of the feasts, a huge number of stray dogs attacked the place and ate up all the food. The Sadhus who had come for the bhandara had to go back hungry.

You believe that your heirs will use your wealth for doing good. This is merely an imagination. If you want your wealth to be used well use it yourself while you are alive. Don't be controlled by ahankara. Let your ahankara propel you towards Bhagwan.

In one place the Shrimad Bhagwat has a description of the upasana of Bhagwan's lotus feet. The fragrance of His feet reached the Sanakadis. They were doing the dhyana of the Brahman (the Brahman has no form and no attributes). The fragrance penetrated their dhyana. Their body thrilled. Their eyes filled with tears of love.

In one place it is described that the Sanakadis were so enchanted by Bhagwan's *charanaamrita* (the water with which Bhagwan's feet have been washed, taken as a blessing) that they forgot the world.

In one place there is a description of His darshan: *Nakhamanichandrikayaa nirastataape`* (11. 2. 54) – the moonlight-like luster of Bhagwan's toe nails removes all suffering.

In one place there is a description of the touch of Bhagwan's foot, the sound of His flute, and of His footprints. '*Vajraankushadhvaja – saroruha – laanchhanaaddhyam`* – Bhagwan's feet have the signs of a *vajra*, *ankush*, *dhvajaa* and *saroj* (thunderbolt, a goad, a flag and a lotus). In one place there is a description of the dust of His feet.

Akrura is a bhagavat. He is a bhakta of Bhagwan's *charana-chinna* (the imprints of Bhagwan's feet). He comes to Vrindavan, and takes Bhagwan away, to Mathura. A person should be *akroora* – not cruel – there should be no *kroorataa* (cruelty). When Akrura takes Shri Krishna away, the prema of the people of Vraja is revealed.

Aho vidhaatastava na kvachid dayaa.

(10. 39. 19)

(The gopis say, 'O Vidhata! You write the fate of people, but there is no compassion in you!')

Bhagwan had to go to Mathura and cleanse it. You will observe that Bhagwan never raised His hand on anyone who lived in Vraja; He killed the Asuras who came from outside. There were Asuras in Mathura – there was the dhobi and the wrestlers who were guarding the *dhanusha* (bow) and others who were filled with an *asura-bhaava* (demonic feelings).

Kansa was Devki's cousin brother. He died of heart failure when he saw Shri Krishna! Bhagwan made all the people bhagavats. He got His work done by Uddhavaji. He asked Uddhavaji to do something for Him. A person who is chosen by Bhagwan for doing His work is blessed indeed!

Devki and Vasudev are also Bhagwan's bhaktas – they are bhagavats. When Balaram and Shri Krishna bent to touch their feet, they raised up both boys –

sasvajaate`na shankayaa – they said, ‘This is Bhagwan! How can we embrace Him?’

Sandeepani Muni is also a bhagavat. Bhagwan brought back his dead sons as a gift. Now, in this, Vasudev and Devki are Bhagwan’s parents, and Sandeepani Muni is His Acharya. Uddhavaji is a bhagavat of another type – he is also a very close friend. Bhagwan sent him to the gopis, where His prema was involved.

When the gopis first saw Uddhavaji they thought it was Shri Krishna who had come back to them. Then Uddhavaji met Nanda Baba and Yashoda. He told them about all the great things Krishna was doing in Mathura. You will be amazed to hear that Yashoda Maiya did not say a single word to him. Nanda Baba listened and responded, but Maiya remained silent, as thought struck dumb.

Shrinvantyashroonyavaastraaksheet sne`hasnutapayodharaa.

(10. 46. 28)

Yashoda Maiya’s eyes were filled with tears. The memory of her child brought milk to her breasts, but she did not utter a single word.

The gopis also went mad. Uddhavaji had studied the Vedas from Brihaspati, the Guru of the Devtas – *shishya brihaspate`saakshaat*. He was a Minister in the Yadu Vanshis’ Government, and a sakha of Shri Krishna. Yet he took *deeksha* (initiation) of prema from the gopis. Then he expressed his desire.

Aasaamaho charanare`nujushaamaham syaam,

vrindaavane`kimapi gulmalataushadheenaam.

(10. 47. 61)

‘These gopis are my Gurus. Let me become a shrub or creeper or some medicinal plant in Vrindavan so that the dust of their feet falls on me. Then, one day I will obtain the kind of prema they have.’

When Uddhavaji returned to Mathura he was highly displeased with Shri Krishna. 'You are busy killing Asuras and establishing Dharma!' he said. 'Of, leave the world as it is; it does not matter if the Asuras remain! It does not matter if Dharma is not established in the world! How can You stay here, in Mathura, leaving the gopis who love You so much?'

Krishna took Uddhavaji aside and showed him His body. Every follicle of His body had gopis. Uddhava saw that Shri Krishna's body was covered from head to foot with gopis. His form was made of gopis!

'Uddhava, what do you think? Every resolve of Mine, every grain in My body, and My every monovritti is attached to the gopis. And you think I leave My premis? Come with Me to Kubja's house.'

Shri Krishna took Uddhava to Kubja's house. He said, 'I don't leave even Kubja, who met me on the road and applied chandan to My forehead. I transformed her into a beautiful woman. I am not able to leave even her – how can I leave the gopis? They have prema for Me. They gave up their homes and families, Artha, Dharma, Kama and Moksha, their loka-paraloka for Me. They gave up decorating their bodies and all bhoga, for Me!'

Akrura is a bhagavat. Bhagwan told Akrura to go to Hastinapur and bring back news about the condition of the Pandavas. 'I am blessed, Maharaj, to be given this chance to obey Your order,' said Akrura. He went there and saw that Kunti was distressed, Vidura was distressed, and the sorry state of the Pandavas.

Every individual in the Bhagwat is a bhagavat, you know! Bhagwan destroys the Asura-bhava of those who are not bhagavats, and makes them bhagavats.

Kansa had two wives, as you know – Asti (I have) and Prapti (I will get) – *idamasteedamapi me`bhavishyati punardhanam*. 'I have this much, and it will become this much.'

What will be done with it?

I don't know!

Whose monovritti is this?

It is the monovritti of Kansa – *kasi hinsaayaam*.

Who is the father of Asti and Prapti?

It is Jarasandha. *Jaraasandha* means the *chid-jada granthi* (the imaginary knot that ties the conscious Atma to the inert body). Asti and Prapti are the daughters of a person who is made of the chid-jada-granthi. They are the offspring of *adhyaasa* (a superimposition connected to something).

When Kansa died, Asti and Prapti became widows. They went to their father – to their creator – Jarasandha. Jarasandha attacked Mathura repeatedly. Bhagwan defeated him.

There is a description of Muchukunda being a bhagavat – he had to be corrected. Bhagwan's amazing marriages are described – Rukmini, Satyabhama, and others. The Parijat tree is described. After that is the eleventh canto, containing many points that are relevant for our manushya jeevan. All these will be covered in the next two days.

Krinvanto vishvamaaryam – make the whole world *aarya* (excellent; noble). This does not mean initiating everybody in one Sampradaya! It means, let all people become superior human beings, with lofty feelings in their heart. Let all forms of constricted thinking be destroyed.

Come, I will take you towards Bhagwan's marriages. People love to talk about marriages, and children! Why do people weep at the episode of Rama going for vanavas? It is because they imagine how they would feel if one of their relatives were to be banished to the forest for fourteen years. They don't weep for Bhagwan; they weep for themselves. If tears come into their eyes at the death of Dashrath, it is because they think of their own father dying.

Narayana! The *gati* (ways) of Dharma are very subtle!

I will tell you one thing about the tenth canto; people generally have the impression that it contains only the leelas of Shri Krishna. They don't read the

original – they listen to discourses here and there, and come to this conclusion. Then they say it has the episodes of Shri Krishna stealing butter, stealing the gopis' garments, and the Raas leela. These episodes are there, no doubt, and they are of great significance. The Bhagwat does not disdain the Satya that is necessary in manav jeevan. If someone tries to mock Shri Krishna about His doing Raas, well, don't the big people in society go to Clubs and dance? Oh, don't say that Shri Krishna was old fashioned; He was ahead of his times! He was cultured and refined. Even Yudhishtira danced!

There are four things that are needed in life. 1. A home. 2. A vehicle. 3. Medical treatment. 4. Security. We should have a good home and a good mode of transport. We need the Sthapatya Veda – the science of engineering. We need artistry. Shri Krishna was a skillful artist. How did He make Dwarka in the sea? Vishvakarma was His servant. The people of Dwarka had beautiful houses; they did not live in huts or under the trees, you know! The Bhagwat-Dharma is not opposed to our having a good home.

Very well; what kind of a *vaahana* (vehicle; mount) did they have? To transport an entire Army that included Regiments of elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers overnight, from Dwarka to Vidarbha – a distance of about a hundred miles – was the prowess of Shri Krishna's Army. It is not against the Bhagwat-Dharma to have excellent vehicles.

Shri Krishna was expert in all forms of art, warfare, and Ayur Veda. There is a description of one of Arjuna's horses getting wounded during the Mahabharata war. Shri Krishna pulled out a medicinal plant from the ground, made a paste of it, and applied it to the wound. The horse recovered in a short while! Shri Krishna had the knowledge of how to protect a baby in the womb. He was expert in the skills given in the Dhanur Veda – the science of archery. Alone, He could face thousands and not be defeated!

And what about the Gandharva Veda – the science of music, dance and drama? Is it easy to dance on the hood of a serpent? Shri Krishna played the flute in a way that made the *jada* (inert) and *che'tana* (having consciousness) enthralled. That means, he was a talented dancer, a talented musician, a

talented singer, a talented actor, and He was talented in the art of disguise as well.

There are occasional descriptions of Shri Krishna changing His appearance. He never kept a moustache. He disguised Himself whenever He wanted, sometimes as a lady, and sometimes as a child. He dressed as a Brahmin when He went to Jarasandha. The meaning of this is that it is not against the Bhagwat-Dharma to be skilled in all the sixty-four *kalaa* (practical arts) given in our Shastras.

Please don't think that the Bhagwat-Dharma is opposed to *laukika* (worldly) Dharma. We see the viewpoint of Vedanta in the tenth canto. In the very first chapter Vasudev gives an upadesha to Kansa.

*Svapne` yathaa pashyati de`hameedrisham
manorathe`naabhinivishtache`tanah.*

(10. 1. 41)

'My brother, don't kill Devki. It will serve no purpose.'

The second chapter has the Garbha Stuti – the Devtas eulogizing Shri Krishna when He was in Devki's womb. In the third chapter Vasudev and Devki do Bhagwan's Stuti when He is born.

Vedanta is given in two forms in the Bhagwat. One is the stuti done with the predominance of the *tat padaartha* (Tat means That, the Brahman; padartha means substance), and the upadesha with the predominance of the *tvam padaartha* (tvam means You, the Atma that is not separate from the Brahman).

Where there is an emphasis on the oneness, there is a description of how the two are actually one. The tenth canto is filled with Vedanta. It contains the Brahma Stuti and the Akrura Stuti. The Veda Stuti is unique! No other stuti can compare with it.

Sata idamutthitam, saditi che`nnanu tarkahatam, vyabhicharati kva cha, kvacha mrishaa na tathobhayayuk,

vyavahritaye` vikalpa, eeshitoandhaparayaa, bhramayati bhaaratee ta, uruvrittibhirukthajadaan.

(10. 87. 36)

The Vedas said, 'Bhagwan, just as an earthen pot is a form of earth, the world made of Sat (pure existence) is a form of the Sat. The pointing out of the *karanaa* (cause) and *kaarya* (effect) is the *dyotaka* (information) of the difference between them. However, the oneness of the karana and the karya is not visible everywhere. For example, avidya is the cause of a rope being mistaken for a snake. In the same way, this world of name and form seems to be real because of avidya.

If the existence of the jagat is advisable from the purpose of *vyavahaara* (interaction), there is no objection. The jagat has no beginning from the viewpoint of a *bhrama* (wrong understanding). The karma-fala (fruit of actions) given in the Shrutis are meant to inspire people to do good karmas.'

There is Bhagwat-Dharma in the marriage of Rukmini and Satyabhama, in the birth of Pradyumna and Bhagwan's other sons. Girls were very strong even in earlier times. Yesterday a gentleman commented that earlier, it was the men who abducted the women, but in these times, it is women who abduct men. I reminded him, 'What had Usha done? She sent Chitrlekha to abduct Pradyumna. Chitrlekha went and brought him, still sleeping soundly, using her supernatural powers. There was also the practice of svayamvara, where a princess chose the man she wanted to marry. Great respect was given to the mana of women.'

According to this shloka: *ashtaavarshaa bhavet`gauree navavarshaa cha rohinee,*' when a marriage was arranged the wishes of the mother and father were given importance. If the boy and girl were mature, their wishes were given full consideration.

Tomorrow I will tell you about the Bhagwat-Dharma pertaining to marriage and sons. I will tell you the purport of the Veda Stuti.

The Tenth Canto.

: 18 :

Uttarardha (the second half): a glimpse.

Bhagwan Vyasa had taken a vow in the Mahabharata.

Yadihaasti tadanyatra yanne`haaasti na kutrachit.

‘What is in the Mahabharata is everywhere in the world, and what is not in it is nowhere.’

See the Gnan of this Mahatma, and see his *nishthaa* (staunch faith) in his own Gnan!

This is the vow made in the Shrimad Bhagwat:

*Ityashe`sha – samaamnaaya – puraanopanishadrasah,
saduddhritah poorvajaatairvyomayaane`rmahaatmabhih.*

‘This is the rasa of the Puranas and Upanishads, and of all the Vedas.’

Atra samaamnaatamaadhyaatmika mashe`shatah.

‘After reading this, nothing remains to be known in the *aadhyaatmika kshe`tra* (metaphysical field).’

.....*Gnaatavyam naavashishyate`*,

peetvaa peeyushamamritam paatavyam naavashishyate`.

Just as nothing remains to be drunk once a person has sipped amrita, nothing remains to be obtained once a person has obtained the Adhyatmik Gnan of the Shrimad Bhagwat. I told you about the Mahabharata merely to clarify that its origin lies in the Upanishads. Match it to this:

Yasmin vignaate` sarvam vighnaanam bhavati.

What is the object of which you get the *vignaana* (acquired Gnan), and can obtain the vignan of everything?

Adrishtam drashdru ashrutam shrtotru amatam mantu avignaatam vignaatru.

(The unseen Seen, the unheard heard / unlistenable listened, the unthought thought, the Unknown known)

This is what the Paramatma is like! Nothing exists but the Paramatma. Once you know Him, you know everything.

I had told you that in the twelfth canto there is a description of the Paramatma who is the substratum of all that exists. He is the illuminator of everything. He is the supreme, non-dual Tattva. And, for Him, - *aham brahma param dhaama brahmaaham param padam'* (I am the Brahman, the supreme abode, the supreme status) – is the vritti that establishes the Satya.

We accept everything in this world as a *vyavahaarika satya* (a truth for the sake of interaction). This is negated only when a person obtains the Brahman. Unless and until a person obtains Gnan about the Brahman, the entire interactive world, and all its objects, seems to be an eternal reality.

When a person obtains the Gnan that the Atma and the Brahman are one, the objects of the world are negated. However, they seem to be real until that happens. Prakriti, the jeeva, the Ishwara, Dharma, Gnan, Yoga etc are all included in the objects of this interactive world.

Brahmapramaatiriktapramaabaadhyatvam vyaavahaarikasatyatvam.

Dvaita cannot be negated until a person obtains *brahmapramaa* (the prama – right intellect, about the Brahman). The *laya* (disappearing) of dvaita is possible; it is possible that the duality is not perceived. The *baadha* (negation) of dvaita means that all interaction in the world of duality continues normally. The Ishwara's puja continues to be done, and even Samadhi is achieved. The jeeva continues with his routine activities and Dharma, and the world is perceived as normal; but the person gets the prama about the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman. No false understanding remains about their being any other Satya. Life

goes on as before. The Ishwara remains, Bhakti remains, the jeeva remains, and the jagat remains. All worldly action continues as before. There can be no greater affirmation of vyavhar!

This is not for sitting in a cave with the eyes closed, or for running away to the mountains. This is for destroying the bhram of duality.

What is the way to do this?

All the cantos give the sakshatkara of the adhishtana (direct experience of the substratum) by giving gnan about the *adhikaaree* (qualified person), sadhan, and *praakrita parinaama* (the natural result). *Vishvaasa* (staunch faith) is not needed in this. *Bhaavanaa* (developing a particular feeling) is not needed either. There is no need for any particular state. This Gnan shows the object as it is. Any state that is created by effort will be temporary. This is explained in the Bhagwat.

Janimasatah sato mritimutaatmani ye`cha bidaam,

vipanamritam smarantyupadishanti na aarupitaih.

Trigunamayah pumaaniti bhidaa yadabodhakrita,

tvayi na tatah paratra sa bhaved`dabodharase`.

(10. 87. 25)

The Vedas said, ‘Prabhu, some people believe that this *asat jagata* (transient world) is created, and some people say that Mukti is attained when the *sat-roopa dukha* (the dukhas that seem to be Satya) are destroyed. Others say that the Atmas are many, while some believe that the Satya is the Swarga and other loka that are attained through karmas. All these ideas are caused by bhram. Agnan makes people think that the Purusha (the Atma in an individual) is *trigunaatmaka* – composed of the three gunas of Sattva, Raja and Tama. You are beyond agnan, so there is no kind of *bhe`dabhaava* (feeling of separateness) in You.

People say, “Moksha is yet to be obtained”, “the Atma is not yet the Brahman”, “Moksha will be achieved one day by doing sadhan”. They believe that the asat world has been created. If Moksha is not present now – if it is created – it will also

be destroyed. If the Atma is not the Brahman at this very moment – if it is expected to become the Brahman at some point in the future – it will end one day. Therefore, those who believe that doing sadhan will is the way to become the Brahman, and that the bonds of this world are real at this moment, also believe that the individual human form is real, for now; later it will be removed.

Uta aatmani ye`cha bhidaam – they say that in the beginning there are many Atmas; then they will become one someday. *Vipanamritam smaranti* – they believe that the connection between karmas and the fruits of the karmas is real for a jeeva. And, *trigunamayah pumaaniti bhidaa* – “I am stupid, I am agitated, I am at peace”. They believe this and sit quietly. All their beliefs are because of their agnan about the Paramatma.’

Because of not knowing their *svaroopa* (essence; true form) people believe in the connection between karmas and the fruits of the karmas. When Veda Bhagwan bestows the Gnan about our swarup, *tvayi na tatah paratra sa bhava`davabodharase`* – the Gnan by which we are aware of the objects around us, of our own eyes, mama, and our individual ‘I’ – and being the owner of this ‘I’ – this Gnan is the unbroken, eternal, non-dual Parabrahma Paramatma.

Sata itamutthitam saditi che`nnanu tarkahatam vyabhicharati kva cha kva cha mrishaa na tathobhayayuk,

vyavahritaye` vikalpa eeshitoandhaparamparayaa bhramayati bhaaratee ta uruvrittibhirukthajadaan.

(10. 87. 36)

‘Is this world Sat because it is created from the Sat?’ continued the Shrutis. ‘Not at all!’

There is one Sat that is not created and is never destroyed. There is also a temporary Sat that is born, and it dies. Won’t this be the number two Sat? It will be like the black money account of businessmen!

The number one Sat is not created, it is eternal and indestructible. The number two Sat is created and it is destroyed. It is transitory.

To accept two kinds of Satya means to break Satya. *Bhe`da* (separateness; difference) is in asatya. There are two bhedas – those that are perceived at times, and not perceived at times. The *bhaava-abhaava* (present – absent) forms are Satya, but the adhishtana that illuminates them is Satya.

I will tell you the style of the Shrimad Bhagwat. In the eighty-fifth chapter of the tenth canto Vasudev says, ‘Krishna! You are the Brahman!’

Shri Krishna says, ‘Father, not only I, you are also the Brahman. So are Devki Maiya, Balarambhaiya, and all the people of Dwarka. All the beings in the world are also the Brahman.’ This is defining aishwarya, the glory of the Ishwara.

Bhagwan showed Devki her sons who had died, and then made them disappear. He brought them from Bali’s realm, and they become worthy of worship in this loka and in paraloka.

Dharma is described in the eighty-sixth chapter. It states that according to Dharma Shri Krishna’s sister, Subhadra, should be married to Arjuna, not to Duryodhan. Balaramji wanted to arrange her marriage with Duryodhan. Balaramji is *praanaatmaa* (prana is the wind in the individual body that activates the Atma attached to the body), and Shri Krishna is *pragnaatmaa* (the pragna is the right intellect that activates the Atma in the body). Shri Krishna says, ‘Subhadra is My sister, she is My shakti; she cannot be wedded to any other but Me.’

But You are the Ishwara!

‘Yes, I am the Ishwara, but in the eyes of the world Subhadra has become My sister. Her marriage should be arranged with Arjuna, not Duryodhan.’ This is the viewpoint of Dharma.

Bhadram karne`bhih shrunuyaama de`vah bhadram
pashye`mahakshabhiryajatraah, bhadramapi vaataya me`manah.

(O Devtas, may we hear and see what is auspicious, with organs steady and the body praying. May we attain the lifespan allotted to us.)

This '*bhadram – bhadram*' (auspicious) that comes repeatedly in the Vedas – the Bhadra Devi gets married to Shri Krishna, and Subhadra gets married to Arjuna. Arjuna and Shri Krishna are Nara-Narayana (human and divine forms of the Atma). This is the subtle Dharma that is described.

After this comes the episode of Shri Krishna going to Mithila, where two bhaktas wanted Him to come to their homes. One was a very poor Brahmin, Shrutadev, who did not even have a mat to sit on. The other was the Raja of that State, Bahulashva. Bhagwan went to Shrutadev's hut for one day. The Brahmin began to dance with joy! Bhagwan created two forms of Himself and the Rishis who were accompanying Him. They spent one day with Shrutadev and one month with Bahuklashva, but the time was actually the same! That means, *kaala* (Time) and *de'sha* (space; area) are not separated. Kaala is known by the measure of *dravya* (matter; substance). A person who has control over dravya can control desha and kaala.

Yasha (fame; renown) is defined in the eighty-seventh chapter. In the Veda Stuti the Vedas sing about Bhagwan's yash.

The eighty-eighth chapter defines Shree.

Rudra faced danger after granting a vara to Vrikasura, but Shri Krishna's *laxmi* (Shree, the goddess of prosperity and beauty) is indestructible.

The eighty-ninth chapter gives the definition of Gnan. Bhrigu goes to test the three Devtas Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The other two are angered, but Vishnu Bhagwan forgives him. It is the swarup of Gnan to do *kshamaa* (have forgiveness) on the *adhyastha* (that which is superimposed). Kshama is the swarup of the adhishtana.

Kshama means the *dharatee* (earth). People dig the dharati, spit and urinate on it. They also worship the earth with chandan and flowers, but the dharati remains equal towards both. This is called kshama. This entire world of name and form is supported by the dharati. The dharati pardons all offenses. Gnan and kshama are the characteristics of the dharati's swarup.

The ninetieth chapter describes Shri Krishna's wives, who were completely immersed in Him. A mental distraction in prema occurred. There is no bhoga here; there is Yoga even in bhoga, and there is bhoga even in Yoga in their lives. There is viyoga even in sanyoga and sanyoga even in viyoga. Shri Krishna is in front of them, but His wives experience mental viyoga. That means Shri Krishna is a *vairagee* (having complete detachment) personified.

There are three types of viyoga in the Bhagwat – mental, verbal and physical. Shri Krishna's wives are so delicate that they become dukhi by just mental viyoga – by the thought of being separated from Him. If Bhagwan saves you from bhoga one day, you can take it that He has protected your characteristic of being a bhakta.

So, the wives of Shri Krishna feel anguish at the very thought of being parted from Him.

There is no viyoga from Shri Krishna at all, anywhere. Rukmini becomes distressed at *vaachika viyoga* (verbal viyoga) when Shri Krishna teases her by telling her she should get married to whoever she wants.

The gopis don't get distressed by mental or verbal viyoga – they get distressed by physical separation. Bhagwan has to disappear from their midst. That means their prema is so strong that they would get immersed in His dhyana if there was mental viyoga; they would not be aware of any feeling of separation. If He was to tell them something of the kind of what He told Rukmini, they would have quarreled with Him at once! They consider Shri Krishna to be their own. When He became antardhyana they experienced His physical viyoga. They became dukhi. The prema that was kept hidden in their hriday swept aside all their natural restraint.

Before this, there is a description of the eclipse at Kurukshetra, given in three chapters. Is this a Yagna or is it Satsang? You will be astonished at this episode. It is written:

*Naagnirna sooryo na cha chandrataarakaa na bhoorjalam kham shvasanoatha
vaangmanah,*

upaasitaa bhe`dakrito harantyaadham vipashchito ghnanti muhoortase`vayaa.

*Yasyaatmabuddhih kunape` tridhartuke` svadheeh kalatraadishu bhauma
ijyadheeh,*

yatteerthabuddhih salile` na karhichij jane`shvabhigne`shu sa e`va gokharah.

(10. 84. 12 – 13)

Agni, Surya, Vayu, the Chandrama, and the stars do not remove dukha. They do not remove paapa. If one person does Yagnas for a hundred thousand years, and another person does Satsang for a minute, the Satsang can make a person's vritti Brahmakara, and remove avidya.

A Samadhi that lasts thousands of years does not have the capacity to remove avidya, because in Samadhi there is no feeling of *nivartya* – *nivartaka* (to be removed – the remover). It only saves a person from *vikshe`pa* (mental agitation). Samadhi does not accept agitation. Gnan, however, negates agitation. This is why Shri Krishna said, '*Yasyaatmabuddhih kunape` tridhaatuke`* - people believe the body to be their "I". *Svadheeh kalatraadishu* – they believe the wife and son to be "mine". They believe a stone or clay image to be an object of worship, and water to be a *teertha* (holy place). Yet, when it comes to a Mahatma they do not consider him to be a *teertha* or an object worthy of worship! They do not consider him to be their own or their Atma! You don't need to go anywhere else to look for an ox or a donkey – you only have to see these people!'

Please don't be under the impression that the Shrimad Bhagwat is only about Bhagwan's dancing with the gopis! Foolish people don't read the Bhagwat for themselves. They hear a little here and a little there, and declare that it has descriptions of Bhagwan stealing butter, etc. My brother, these descriptions are also there, and so is the description of Bhagwan's stealing the gopis' garments; but have you heard this:

Na hyammayaani teerthaani na de`vaa mrichchhilaamayaah,

te`punantyrukaale`na darshanaade`va saadhavah.

(10. 84. 11)

Water does not make a teertha, clay and stone do not make a Devta. They do make a person pavitra, but after a very long time. Satsang, however, makes a person pavitra immediately. It takes our mana away from the matters of this world – from sin and suffering – and places it in Bhagwan.

At Kurukshetra, Vasudev comes and tells the Mahatmas, 'I will become pure when you conduct a Yagna for me.' Naradji said, 'Vasudev is a fool!

*Sannikarsho hi martyaanaamanaadaranakaaranam,
gaangam hitvaa yathaanyaambhastatratyo yaati shuddhaye`.*

(10. 84. 31)

Staying with someone results in not respecting them. People who live on the banks of the Ganga go to other lakes to bathe and purify themselves. This is because they live close to Gangaji.'

We tend to disdain Sants because we meet them in this world. The fact that Satsang is superior to a Yagna is explained in the episode of the eclipse at Kurukshetra. There, Bhagwan became the Guru of the gopis. He gave them upadesh. He taught them adhyatma – *gopeenaam sa gururgatih* – and gave them kalyan.

Before this episode is the story of Sudama. Sudama was very poor. When he reached Bhagwan's palace at Dwarka, Bhagwan welcomed him lovingly. He made Sudama sleep on His own bed, where He slept with Rukmini every night. He slept beside Sudama. Rukmini stood behind the bed all night, fanning them both. This description is given in the Bhagwat: *Nivaasitah priyaajushte` paryanke`*. This is the characteristic of Bhagwan; it is a;; Bhagwat-Dharma. Satsang is superior to Yagna – a poor Brahmin who doesn't even have proper clothes, is greeted lovingly.

The Shrimad Bhagwat says:

Preeto vyamunchadabbindaan ne`traabhyaam pushkare`kshanah.

Tears of love flowed from Shri Krishna's beautiful eyes. He snatched a handful of rice flakes from Sudama, and gave everything to him. Sudama was a Brahmin and a Rishi – he had the virtues of both. Shri Krishna gave kalyan to him, to his wife and to his son.

Uddhavaji is a bhagavat, so Bhagwan did as he advised, and went first to Yudhishtira's Yagna; He did not go to fight Jarasandha first. He made Yudhishtira a Bhagwat.

There is an amazing description of the Yagna. The smallest lapse can lead to great suffering. When Duryodhan fell into the water, Bhimsen and Draupadi clapped their hands and laughed. That laughter became the cause of the Mahabharata war. The Bhagwat-Dharma tells us to be very careful about how we behave.

Bhagwan fulfills all the wishes of His bhaktas. Actually, the purpose of the Rajasuya Yagna undertaken by Yudhishtira was to show that Bhagwan is superior to all. The *agrapoojaa* (worship of the most superior person present) was done of Shri Krishna. Shishupal, Dantavakra, and some others had dvesha for Shri Krishna, but they also got kalyan. Yudhishtira said, 'Shri Krishna is a Tattvagna; karmas neither increase nor reduce His *te'ja* (spiritual brilliance).

E'sha nityo mahimaa brahmanasya na karmanaa vardhate`no kaneeyaan.'

Bhagwan even adopted a disguise when He went to kill Jarasandha. He gave shakti to Bhimsen.

Why?

Jarasandha had unjustly imprisoned twenty thousand eight hundred men, who were set free when he was killed by Bhimsen. To kill one man in order to save twenty thousand eight hundred men is a noble action. The Bhagwat-Dharma has no fear of the principles of *himsaa-ahimsaa* (killing – non-violence). The main point is *bhagavat-pre`ranaa* (what is prompted by Bhagwan).

Vasudev also gave up his pledge and obeyed Shri Krishna's command to take Him to Gokul.

The episodes of Bhagwan's marriages are very strange. On one occasion He won His bride by putting a rope through the noses of seven wild bulls. On one occasion He shot an arrow at an unseen target to win His bride. He abducted one bride, whose mana was attached completely to Him.

Bhaumasura had kept sixteen thousand maidens imprisoned. Who would accept a maiden who had been the prisoner of an Asura? Shri Krishna gave them all a respected position in society by marrying them all. This was a revolutionary step. Bhagwan did not bother about Yudhishtira's disapproval, about what the people of Dwarka would say, or whether worldly people criticized Him for this. He believed the maidens should be given the same respected status as other women. He brought them to Dwarka and got married to them. He established them in His palace. He accepted even Kubja; these maidens were far above her.

There was a Raja called Paundraka, who was very envious of Shri Krishna's fame. He would imitate Shri Krishna to show he was His equal. He was a hypocrite and he had great *ahankaara* (vanity; arrogance). Kansa was ahankara combined with fear. Shishupal was ahankara combined with dvesha. Bhagwan destroyed them all.

Very well; where did the Bhagwat-Dharma rise from?

The special characteristic of the Bhagwat-Dharma is that it can rise from even a smell! Inhale the fragrance of tulsi – Bhagwat-Dharma arises!

However, the *mahimaa* (greatness; glory) of the things should be known from before. The mahima of the *moorti* (Bhagwan's image) should be heard. The Bhagwat-Dharma rises even from the touch of a Sant. You must know the mahima of tulsi, how dear she is to Bhagwan. If you are aware of this, Bhagwat-Dharma will come to you when you inhale the fragrance of tulsi. Doing the darshan of Bhagwan's murti will be Bhagwat-Dharma. If the mahima of a Sant is known to you His darshan and his touch will be Bhagwat-Dharma. Listening to a mantra is Bhagwat-Dharma, but it is important that you are aware of the importance of all these. *Shabda* (sound), *sparsha* (touch), *roopa* (form; appearance), *rasa* (flavor)

comes from taking *prasaada* (food offered to Bhagwan and then taken as his blessing) are all Bhagwat-Dharma.

I will quote the Bhagwat to give you an example.

*Uchchhishtale`paananumodito dvijaih sakritsma bhunje` tadapaastakilbishah,
e`vam pravrittasya vishuddhache`tasastaddharma e`vaatmaruchih prajaayate`.*

(1. 5. 25)

Bhagwat-Dharma should come from the food you eat, from the things you smell, the things you see, the things you touch, the things you listen to, and the dhyana you do; but it mahima must first be known.

Rukmini lived in Kundipur (Vidarbha). She had never seen Shri Krishna, never smelled Him, heard His voice, never tasted Him, and never touched Him. How did prema for Him arise in her hriday?

*Shrutvaa gunaam bhuvanasundara shrunvataam te` nivishya
karnarvivarairharatoanga taapam,*

*roopam drishaam drishimataamakhilaarthalaabham tvayyachyutaavishati
chittamapatrapam me`.*

(10. 52. 37)

‘I have heard about Your virtues. They are such that they came into my hriday through the doors of the ears, and destroyed all my *paapa-taapa* (sins – suffering). I have no shyness left; my pride is destroyed, my vanity is destroyed. My chitta goes to You shamelessly!’

Shri Krishna Himself came and took her away to Dwarka.

The mahima of listening to Vedanta is that the chitta vritti becomes Brahmakara, and destroys avidya. Avidya is imagines, and therefore, an imagined identification with the Brahman has the capacity to remove it. Then the person

gets the sakshatkara of the Paramatma. Here, in the Bhagwat-Dharma, Bhagwan Himself comes into our hriday and removes our dukha, agitation, and suffering.

The word *rukma* is connected to the Hiranyagarbha. The two words – hiranya and rukma – mean the same thing. Hiranyagarbha means, Rukmini is the *sookshma vritti* (the subtle mental inclination) that meets the Ishwara. Bhagwan Shri Krishna brings Rukmini to Dwarka and gets married to her. Then, Pradyumna and Bhagwan's other sons are born.

We will complete this auspicious episode of Shri Krishna and Rukmini's marriage tomorrow.

The Eleventh Canto.

The removal of avidya: Mukti.

The twelfth canto explains what the Param Tattva is. It is the *akhanda* (unbroken; eternal) advitiya Tattva that is indicated by the negation of the three worlds, up to the bodha of the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman.

The purpose of the twelfth canto is to describe the Brahman that is the adhishtana, or substratum, of all that exists. This is why you will find that many of the *upaasaka* (people who worship the Ishwara with form and attributes) who do the seven-day ritual of the Bhagwat Saptah altogether omit the description of the adhishtana that is *nirguna* (without attributes) and *niraakaara* (without form), *nirvikaara* (not subject to distortion), *nirdharmaka* (not bound by the rules of instituted Dharma) Brahman that is not separate from the *pratyak chaitanya* (pure consciousness within the individual).

Therefore, *yogino vibhyati hyasmaad abhayabhayadaarshinah* – the Yogis fear it greatly. They are afraid of the very name of the Brahman. It is like a child who asks, ‘How can I stay home all alone?’ Just as a child is afraid to stay all by himself in the house, the *dvaitavaadee* (those who believe in the principle of duality) are afraid to even imagine their being advaita! This is why the twelfth canto is meant to describe the adhishtana Tattva.

The eleventh canto leans a little on the opposite side. That means, the adhishtana Tattva is a Tattva that can be known only after avidya is removed. The removal of avidya is essential for obtaining Moksha. This is described in the eleventh canto.

Bhrama (false understanding) is of three types – I am bound, I am a karta, I am a paapi, a punyatma, dukhi, sukhi, and *parichhinna* (a separate entity). I am a person who comes into this world and leaves it. I die, and go to Swarga or Narak – meaning, in desha and kaala. I get millions of forms composed of the five elements.’

1. I have to come and go in desha – this is a bhram.

2. I change in time – this is a bhram.
3. I get several forms (different species) in matter – this is a bhram.

A person who does not understand the principle of the *adhyaropa* (superimposition connected to something) and *apavaada* (its negation) has no understanding of the Shastras. It is impossible to understand the supreme purport of the Shastras without getting a proper understand of the principle of the adhyarop and apavad.

Great books are written, stories are written, and estimates are made. People say, 'I have seen the world. It is right in front of me.' All right; is your being a Brahmin *pratyaksha* (known through the senses), or not? It is. However, it is an adhyarop. Is my being a Sanyasi known directly or not? It is. It is clear that I am a Sanyasi. However, this is also an adhyarop.

The purpose of adhyarop is to negate the subtle pride of being a Grihastha (married householder). The feeling of being a Grihastha is also an adhyarop. The adhyarop of being a Sanyasi is made in order to negate the adhyarop of being a Grihastha. It is the apavad of the earlier adhyarop. Then, when we negate both adhyarops – that of being a Grihastha and of being a Sanyasi – only 'I' remains.

For example, there is a human being. When he got married, the adhyarop of becoming a Grihastha was made on the body and mind. Then it was negated when he became a Sanyasi, and the adhyarop of becoming a Sanyasi was made. This, too, was negated when he became an avadhoota – a wandering monk with no possessions.

Similarly, the feelings of being a paapi, punyatma, sukhi, dukhi, etc are superimposed on our Atma, on our swarup. Then they are negated. When this is understood properly the person understands the quintessence of Mukti.

People believe *bandhana* (worldly bondages) to be real, and try to remove them. If a bandhan is Satya it can never be removed. And, if Mukti is not obtained, it can never be obtained, because one can obtain only that which has always been with us, and only the eternal *nivritti* (withdrawal from worldly involvement) is *nivritti*.

The worldly bondage seems to be real only because of bhram, and it is bhram that makes Mukti seem unattained. You are not to become free of the bandhan; nor are you to attain Mukti. You are to become free of the bhram that makes you believe that you have bandhan and are not Mukta.

Bhram is removed by Tattvagnan, by a *gnaanaakaara vritti* (the feeling that you have Gnan), a *brahmaakaara vritti* (the feeling that you are the Brahman). The bandhan is because of your not knowing your own swarup. You become liberated as soon as you obtain the Gnan that Mukti is your swarup.

Mukti is defined in many ways in the eleventh canto. There is Mukti predominated by Gnan. There is Mukti predominated by Yoga. And, there is a nitya siddha Mukti – Mukti you are always aware of.

I am telling you first that Bhagwan gave up His physical form along with the other Yadu vanshis. Here, Mukti is indicated only by giving up His body. Shri Krishna and the Yadu vanshis are nitya – they are an eternal family.

I will tell you one thing – what would happen if Mukti were to be attained by sadhan? If Mukti is attained by some effort or method, it will be a created Mukti. Anything that is created is destroyed in time. It is not eternal. Mukti is not attained by sadhan.

In that case, is sadhan useless?

No, sadhan is far from useless. It is extremely useful. The purpose of sadhan is to purify the antahkarana; sadhan is not done to obtain Bhakti – it is done to remove the tendencies that sully the fourfold mind, or subtle body. The vritti of Tattvamasi (You = the Atma are That = the Brahman) that comes from the Mahavakyas is essential for removing avidya. And, this vritti will come only to a shuddha antahkarana.

What is described in the first five chapters of the eleventh canto?

Look; the eleventh canto shows that even a glorious vansha like the Yadu vansha is destroyed in time. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma. It teaches us to be detached. Dwarka had so many great palaces and great Rajas. All of them, and Shri Krishna

Himself, had bhakti and shraddha for Brahmins and Mahatmas. Yet their own sons had neither bhakti nor shraddha. There is no need to lament if your children don't have bhakti and shraddha. This is given in the very first chapter, you know! When your ashtraddhalu children get a jolt in life, they will come back to track. Remember your own younger days – your father would surely have grumbled that your ways were different from theirs! I remember my grandfather telling me that I had very modern ideas. He would also tell me what a Dharmatma he was, compared to me!

This means, an age comes when a human being's buddhi becomes wayward. Some revolutionary changes come into life. We should not fear change.

The Yadu vansha was destroyed. Had Shri Krishna stayed on, had Ugrasen stayed, had Vasudev stayed.....it is no use thinking on those lines. Nothing is permanent in this world. This detachment is a sadhan for Mukti.

The second chapter of the eleventh canto explains that Satsang is a sadhan for Mukti. One episode of Satsang is when Vasudev and Devki get the Satsang of Narad. The other is when Raja Nimi gets the Satsang of the Nava Yogeshwaras. Narad's Satsang is the Satsang of a bhakta. Naradji comes to Vasudevji's house. Vasudev is a bhakta; Naradji is an Acharya of Bhakti.

The Nava Yogeshwaras, however, did not come to Raja Nimi's palace. They came to the place where he was doing a Yagna. Raja Nimi was whole eligible for Tattvagnan. Raja Yadu went to the avadhoot Dattatreya to get Satsang.

There are three points in this. One is to go to somebody's house and give upadesh. The second is to go to a Yagnabhoomi and give upadesh, and the third is to obtain upadesh by going to a Mahatma. These are three sections of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

In Satsang, the *sanga* (association) of Sants is one kind, and the sang of Bhagwan is another kind.

We hear this shloka every day:

Kshanaardhoapi satsanga she`vahirnrinaam.

Even half a moment of Satsang gives kalyan.

It is we who remain trapped in our *duraagraha* (wrong insistence) – we are afraid that we may be cheated. Oh, my brother! Keep your money with you – I don't want it. You can spend it on drinks or at your Club, or keep it intact. The Government will take it or it may be stolen. Your body has no connection with your wealth. A human form is *durlabha* (rare; not obtained easily).

*Durlabho maanusho de`ho de`hinaam kshanabhangurah,
tatraapi durlabham manye`vaikunthapriyadarshanam.*

(The human form is durlabh. It is transient. Even more durlabh is to get the Satsang that gives the darshan of one who is loved in Vaikuntha.)

The Satsang of bhaktas who are dear to Bhagwan is even more durlabh. The teaching you get from tuitions can give you worldly knowledge, but until you get the *vidyaa* (learning of spiritual truths) – until you accept vidya with *vinaya* (humility) – you won't obtain true vidya.

*Manye`akutashchid bhayamachyutasya paadaambujapaasanamatra nityam,
udvignabuddhe`rasadaatmabhaavaad vishvaatmanaa yatra nivartate`bheeh.*

(11. 2. 33)

(The Yogeshwara called Kavi told Raja Nimi, 'The daily upasana of Shri Krishna's lotus feet gives kalyan. There is no fear involved. A person gets attached to insignificant things like the body, house, etc. His love for them causes agitation. Upasana removes all fear and agitation.)

Worldly people clutch at unimportant things. They believe that, which will be left behind one day, to be 'mine'. This leads to agitation. For such people the only way is to stop worshipping their body and the people related to the body, and worship the Ishwara. People spend hours in the bathroom soaping themselves. If you tell them to do Bhagwan's puja for five minutes, they will say they have no time! They are eligible to be punished by the Ishwara; not for His kripa! Two hours for bathing and not even five minutes for the Ishwara? Don't you feel ashamed? You

have all the time in the world to gossip about other people, to speak ill about them, and to worry about little things, but you have no time sit in peace and do bhajan?

Asadaatmabhaavaat sadaa udvignabuddhaye`.

People's buddhi is agitated because of the feeling of 'I' and 'mine' for the things that are transient. They are not agitated because of money coming and going, or whether someone died or lived – they are agitated because their mana is tangled in worldly matters. What is there in this world that you cannot give up? So, attach your mana to Bhagwan's feet.

It is a special attribute of the Bhagwat-Dharma: *na skhale`nna pate`diha* – you don't get paapa if you make a mistake. There is no *patana* (downfall) on the path of Bhakti. You don't even get deprived of the fruit of the action. This path is the same for men and women. If all your actions are done for the sake of Bhagwan, it becomes the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The Dharma given in the Manu Smriti and other Smritis is dependent on certain karmas, but the Bhagwat-Dharma is such that all karmas become Dharma.

Kaaye`na vaachaa manase`ndriyairvaa buddhyaatmanaavaanusritasvabhaavaat,

Karoti yad yat sakalam parasmai naaraayanaayaiva samarpaye`ttat.

(All you do with your body, mana, buddhi and nature, offer it up to Narayana.)

When we were young we folded our hands and chanted this.

Raajee hain useemain jismain te`ree raja hai.

(I am happy in whatever You choose.)

Whether the work is completed or not, whether I get its fruit or not, let me just continue to serve You. My goal is not to complete the work; all I want is to serve You all my life. And, what fruit do I want? I want You to stand before me!

Gurude`vataatmaa – consider your Guru and your *Ishta* (chosen form of worship) your most dear, and keep doing the Bhagwat-Dharma. Listen to Bhagwan's katha, utter His name. Bhakti, vairagya and *anubhava* (experience), Vairagya, Bhakti and anubhav, Anubhav, vairagya and Bhakti. These are the swarup of this Bhagwat-Dharma. They come into our life.

Two types of Satsang are given. One is the association of Sants, and the other is the association of *bhagavanta* (Bhagwan). When you do Satsang with Bhagwan *preeti* (affection) will arise in your hriday. Satsang basically gives rise to Gnan and preeti for the Sants. The *sadvastu* (the object that is the Satya, the Atma that is not separate from the Brahman) that abides in the hriday has to awaken for anand to manifest.

Satsang gives dukha at times. You will be shocked to hear this. You will ask how this is possible. Satsang gives dukha when you can't get it.

Bichurata e`ka praana hari le`heen, milata e`ka daaruna dukha de`heen.

When a Sant leaves, people feel the dukha of his leaving; and wicked people give dukha when they come into your life.

Satsang is done outside, and Bhagwat-sang is done within. Therefore, whether it is an Atma-akara vritti, or whether you are established in the drashta-bhava, whether you are shanta or whether you have the Brahmatmaikya bodha –

Sarvabhooteshu yah pashyed bhagavadbhaavamaatmanah,

bhootaani bhagavatyaatmanyeshcha bhaagavatottamah.

(11. 2. 45)

Remember that Bhagwan is in all, and all are in Bhagwan. In Bhakti there is no need to keep your eyes shut; Bhagwan can be seen with open eyes. He can be seen even when your eyes are shut. He is seen even when you quarrel and He is seen even when you do prema. He is in all, and all are in Him. This is one form of Bhakti.

And, you can have Ishwara-buddhi only for the Ishwara and *maîtree* (friendship; goodwill) for others – *pre`mamaitree kripope`kshaa* – have prema for the Ishwara, maitri for bhaktas, do kripa on the dukhi, and ignore the people who have dvesha. This is the Bhagwat-Dharma.

To ignore people who are filled with hatred and ill-will, be compassionate towards those who are suffering, have camaraderie for bhaktas, and have prema for Bhagwan is Bhagwat-Dharma.

Don't worry about your body. Don't worry about wealth coming or going. Remain engrossed in prema for Bhagwan. If you do this, Bhagwan Himself comes and sits in the hriday, and does kalyan.

Thus, Mukti through vairagya, and Mukti through Satsang; and within Satsang is *satpreetee* – love for Bhagwan.

The third sadhan is vivek – to separate.

What is vivek?

One is the vivek of guna-dosha. Let the doshas be removed from your life, and inculcate gunas. To stay with your Guru and inculcate virtues and give up the faults you have.

The other vivek is to separate Maya, the Ishwara's power of illusion, from the Atma; to come to the conclusion that the swarup of the Atma and the Brahman are one. This is Brahmatmaikya Gnan.

Gnaanakriyaartha falaroopatayorushaktirbrahmaiva bhaati sadasachcha tayoh param yat,

Tadave`hi soamin – understand, 'I am this.'

Thus, vivek is of three kinds.

1. To separate the gunas from the doshas, and give up the doshas. This is *shodhana* (purifying) of the antahkarana.

2. To do the vivek of Maya and the *saakshee* (uninvolved witness; the Atma in the individual), and give up Maya. This is drashta-drishya vivek.
3. To obtain the bodha of the oneness of the Atma and the Brahman. This is Brahmatmaikya bodha.

The vivek of gunas and doshas is the purifying of the antahkarana. It involves an effort for removing kama, krodha etc, and inculcating *shama-dama* (mental and physical restraint) This is also for purifying the antahkarana.

And, the conviction that Maya is not 'I' – nor is it 'mine' – is the purifying of the Atma.

The experience that the Atma is the Brahman is Tattvagnan, because the Brahman means the non-dual, infinite Atma-chaitanya. This is also the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Now, suppose that even after this, you don't get established in this state – what then?

Then, have a dosha-drishhti for this sansara – understand the faults of this world and develop vairagya. Do *nishkaama karma* – work without any desire other than that of pleasing Bhagwan. This purifies the antahkarana.

Also do Bhagwan's aradhana, and make your chitta focused unwaveringly on Bhagwan. Also, do shravan of Bhagwan's charitra.

These are the methods explained by the nine Yogeshwaras. By doing these, the hriday becomes pure, and the person obtains Tattvagnan, and gets Mukti.

The first five chapters of the eleventh canto describe the five methods for removing the five-faceted avidya. The discussion between Shri Krishna and Uddhava is given after this, in twenty four chapters. These twenty four chapters describe methods of Yoga. The same interpretation is given in them.

The discussion between Yadu and avadhoot Dattatreya is predominated by vairagya. Grihasthas listen to it enthusiastically, but all the Dharma described in it applies mostly to wandering Monks who keep no possessions. In this, as long as

you identify with your body you will not be able to follow the Dharma of the five Tattvas – the elements of which all forms are composed. When you develop the feeling of being a Tattva, you will be able to follow the Dharma of the elements. An avadhoot is not a shareer; He is not an individual.

Swami Rama Tirtha used to say, ‘When I walk, the whole Bharat Varsha walks. When I speak, it is the Bharat Varsha speaking. The entire world is my body.’

The whole prithivi, agni, jala, vayu, akash, the indriyas, mana and ahankara, the *mahatattva* (cosmic intelligence) and Prakriti are all our swarup.

Dattatreya’s twenty four Gurus indicate the method for crossing over the twenty four facets of Prakriti.

Shri Krishna told Uddhava about the talk between Raja Yadu and Dattatreya. What is the swarup of Gnan in this? What is the swarup of Bhakti in this? And, what is the swarup of the four *varna* (social divisions of Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) in this?

Detailed descriptions of Bhakti are given in the books on Bhakti, and detailed descriptions of Gnan are given in the books on Gnan.

But what about the descriptions on Dharma?

Even had there not been eighteen Smritis – had there been sixty or seventy Smritis available – it is not only about the Manu Smriti and Yagyavalkya Smriti – the descriptions of Dharma given in the Bhagwat has greater clarity than any other work in Sanskrit literature.

Just think – when Bhagwan is one, how was Dharma created in Him? Prakriti is one, how were Dharma and adharma created in it? The one Prakriti is composed of the five elements – how were Dharma and adharma created in them?

First it is explained that in the forms of the Tattva there is no Dharma or adharma. Dharma and adharma are defined only from the viewpoint of adhyarop and apavad. This viewpoint of the Shrimad Bhagwat is given in the twenty first and twenty second chapters of the eleventh canto. It is worth reading.

The methods of obtaining *siddhi* (supernatural powers) are such that anyone who studies them seriously can understand which method gives which siddhi. However, I will tell you the things that are written with the purport of the Vedas and Dharma.

Kim vidhatte`kimaachashte`kimanoodya vikalpaye`t,

ityasyaa hridayam loke`naanyo mad ve`da kashchana.

Maam vidyatte`abhidyatte`maam vikalpyaapohyate`tvaham.

It is said, ‘*E`taavaan sarvave`daarthah*’ – memorize this! It is the purport of all the Vedas.

What is the *ve`daartha* – the purport of the Vedas?

Maam vidyate`abhidyatte`maam.

‘I am both the *vidhi* (to be done) and the *nishe`dha* (forbidden). Agni, Vayu, Kuber, etc are all My names – *vikalpyaapohyate`tvaham*. Just as different types of ornaments – bangles, necklaces, ear rings – are made, but when melted it is all gold, the whole of Creation is shown in different forms, and then negated.

E`taavaan sarvave`daarthah shabda aasthaaya maam bhidaam,

maayaamaatramanoodyaante`pratisiddhya praseedati.

(11. 21. 43)

(All the Shrutis about Yagnas and other rituals give My ruling. They describe Me in their statements on upasana. They superimpose, and then negate, all the different objects in Me. They explain the illusion created by Maya, and explain how I am the only Satya.)

This explains that all the *bhe`da* (differences and separateness) seen is an illusion created by a magic show. It is merely Maya.

The Buddhists say that the *prapancha* (interactive world in which we live) is a shoonya – a vacuum – based on reciprocal opposites. The Jains say that the world

is a result of *ane`kaanta* (multiple results), but it is actually *e`kaanta* (having just one result) in the *sarasa roopa* (beautiful form).

Vedanta, however, gives Gnan about the adhishtana. It says that the world is like a rope that is mistaken for a snake; the snake is imagined in the rope. The world is perceived as being real, without remembering that it is transient and not permanent, because of our ignorance about its substratum.

So, the *lopa* (disappearing) of Gnan about the adhishtana, and the *baadha* (negation) of the prapanch that is a superimposition, is something different.

The purport of all Vedanta is: *maayaamaatramanoodyaante` pratisiddhya praseedati* – all that is perceived is a play of Maya, whether it is the drashta or the drishya, whether it is the *pramaana* (proof) or the *prame`ya* (that, which is proved), whether it is the *upaasya* (that, which is worshipped) or the *upaasaka* (the worshipper). It is all the play of Maya.

After negating everything Vedanta negates itself!

Vedanta says, 'This is the advitiya akhand Paramatma. Even I don't exist.'

It is like a premi telling the priyatam, 'You live, Prabhu, let me die.' This is how the Veda gives the bodha of the Paramatma and then negates itself.

Is there any other book of Dharma in the world that says, 'I am *mithyaa* (a relative truth; transient) once you obtain the Paramatma'? People undertake studies in comparative religion. This is a challenge to them: can you find any other religious book that states, 'Only the Paramatma is Satya. Once you obtain Him, I am a relative truth.'

After this we are told how to do Bhagwan's Yoga, and His upasana. There is a long story about a Brahmin who had *titiksha* (endurance, forbearance). It explains the kind of endurance we should have in our life. Then, there are the stories of Pururva and Ail, and the katha of Bhagwan's upasana.

There is an exposition of the *paramaarth* (supreme truth, ultimate goal). You would all be reading extensively. You will see that in the Shrimad Bhagwat it is

also stated that if someone says that the Tattva is one, it is accepted. If someone says there are two Tattvas, it is accepted. Similarly, it is accepted if it is said that the Tattvas are four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, sixteen, or thirty six Tattvas, it is accepted.

And what if someone says there are ninety six Tattvas? That is also accepted!

The Bhagwat says that each person says what he sincerely perceives to be the truth. He does not yet know about the adhishtana; that the world is an illusion – like the snake imagined in a piece of coiled rope. People speak according to their buddhi.

Now, I will tell you our principle.

Parasvabhaavakarmaani na prashanse`nna garhaye`t,

vishvame`kaatmakam pashyan prakrityaa purushe`na cha.

Parasvabhaavakarmaani yah prashansati nindati,

sa aashu bhrashyate`svaarthaadasadasatyabhinive`shatah.

(11. 28. 1-2)

(Bhagwan Shri Krishna said, 'Uddhava, the fact is that in interaction, the Purusha and Prakriti – the drashta and the drishya – appear to be separate. From the viewpoint of Paramartha both are forms of the same adhishtana. Therefore, we should neither praise nor criticize people for their good and bad qualities. We should maintain a view of the advaita. People who go in for praise and criticism fall from their position of the Paramartha, because sadhan negates their identification with the body, whereas praising or criticizing people strengthens it.)

The sweet grape should not criticize the bitterness of the bitter gourd, and the bitter gourd should not criticize the sweetness of the grape. The grape said, 'You are bitter; your being created is a waste.' The bitter gourd said, 'You are the root of disease; people get diabetes when they eat you.' If you quarrel there is quarrelling; else, both the grape and the bitter gourd have their own virtues.

Parasvabhaava karmaani na prashanse`nna garhaye`t.

A person who gets involved in praise and criticism believes dvaita to be Satya. He gets *abhinive`sha* (identifies with his body; fear of death), and he quarrels.

Dvaita does not exist. There is no separateness in the substratum. Whatever may happen, whatever may be said, whatever may be done; something spoken, something thought – there is no dvaita! When we quarrel we do so because we believe asatya to be Satya. Because of abhinivesh is the asatya, our shanti is broken.

Pratyakshe`naanumaane`na nigame`naatmasamvidaa,

aadyantavadasajgnaatvaa nihsango vichare`diha.

(11. 28. 9)

It is not worth looking at things that have an *aadi* (beginning) and an *anta* (end). Become *nisanga* (free of attachments), and live in the world the way the sun moves in the sky. There should be no *aasakti* (worldly attachments) in life.

The twenty eighth chapter of the eleventh canto is the chapter that defines Paramartha. I suggest you read it someday, giving it your full mind. Then you will know what the *siddhanta* (principle) of the Shrimad Bhagwat is.

Narayana! The twenty ninth chapter has a wonderful description of the Bhagwat-Dharma.

Nare`shvabheekshanam madbhaavam punso bhaavayatoachiraat,

spardhaasooyaatiraskaaraah saahankaaraa viyanti hi.

(11. 29. 15)

It is the one Paramatma who fills all *bhoota* (beings and objects), from a blade of grass to Prakriti, from a worm to Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. When we see this, there is no more feeling of competition or urge to find fault, have ahankara, or disdain anybody.

What is the method for becoming free of ahankara, disdain, envy, or fault-finding?

It is to see one Bhagwan in yourself and in all.

Brahmane`pulkase`ste`ne`brahmane`arke`sfulinga ke`,

akroore`kroore`chaiva samadrik pandito matah.

(11. 29. 14)

A person who sees the Paramatma in a Brahmin and in a butcher, in someone who reveres a Brahmin and in a thief, in the sun and in a spark of fire, in a cruel person and in a compassionate person, is a *vidvaana* (learned person). He is wise. He knows the Bhagwat-Dharma.

The last two chapters of the eleventh canto explain that here, giving up the body is the sadhan for Moksha – meaning, it is Mukti.

If you have not noticed this up to now, you will be surprised; and if you have noticed it – well, surprise is felt only the first time. The second time there is no surprise. The question raised here is: why did Shri Krishna give up His body?

Bhagwan thought, ‘If I keep My body, all the Gnanis will want to keep theirs. They will think that it is good to keep the body, rather than give it up. The body will become important in their eyes.’

That is why – *martye`na kim svasthagatim pradarshayan (11. 31. 13)*. Bhagwan thought, ‘What will I do with this body that is subject to decay and death? A composed person does not hanker to retain his body.’

This is why the first canto says:

Yayaa harad bhuvo bhaaram taam tanum vijahaavajah.

Shri Krishna gave up the body He had used for reducing the burden on this earth.

How?

Kantakam kantake`naiva dvayam chaapeeshituh samam.

(1. 15. 34)

Just as one *kaantaa* (thorn) is used to remove a thorn imbedded in the foot, and then both thorns are thrown away.

Shri Krishna used His Yaduvansha form to reduce the earth's burden and then discarded it.

Yathaa matsyaadiroopaani dhatte`jahayaadyathaa natah.

(1. 15. 35)

Yayaaharad bhuvo bhaaram taam tanum vijahaavajah.

(1. 15. 34)

Just as an actor changes his costume, discarding the earlier one, Bhagwan also changes His shareer. Were He to keep one form – even His *niraakaara* (formless) form – there can be no Ishwara in vyavhar. It would be a vritti of a form, and we wouldn't ever be able to meet Him. If the vritti shifted, it would shift away from the Ishwara.

Therefore, the Ishwara is present in all *akaara* (forms) – Matsya, Kashyap, Varaha, Nrisimha, Vaman, Parashuram, Rama, Krishna, Devi, Ganapati, and Durga. Even though the forms are separate there is no separation in the chit-swarup Parameshwara, just as there is no separation in the Tattva of the five elements.

This is why the eleventh canto is called the Mukti Skandha.

The Twelfth Canto.

: 19 :

There was no sankalpa (formal resolve) at the start of this *pravachana* (discourse) that the Shrimad Bhagwat should be explained in full in all its aspects. The sankalpa was that the relationship between the Manav Jeevan and the Bhagwat-Dharma should be explained. I have told you how the entire Bhagwat related to the life of human beings. I explained it the way a person makes a catalogue, shows the right direction, etc. If you wish to see the Shrimad Bhagwat from the viewpoint of people's lives, this is how you should see it, read it, and understand it.

Obtain the right understanding of what I have said, and what I have not said. A comprehensive understanding is needed. Read the Shrimad Bhagwat yourself. Examine what it contains that is of use in your life.

Give some serious thought to the Shrimad Bhagwat. It is Bhagwan's verbal shareer. There are twelve main *anga* (parts) in Bhagwan's shareer. There is the *dvadashaakshara mantra* – the mantra of twelve syllables, and there is the *dvaadashee vrata* – the austerity of a fast that is concluded on the twelfth day of the lunar calendar. There are the ten indriyas – five sense organs and five organs of action – and the mana, and Bhagwan, who sits in the form of the twelfth.

Similarly, the Shrimad Bhagwat is described in the form of twelve cantos, or Skandhas. In these, the twelfth canto is *vastu pradhaana* – the dominant factor in it is the vastu; the object that is the Ishwara. It explains the swarup of the Ishwara, the Tattva.

The first chapter of the twelfth canto is about all the Rajas that lived and died, the upheavals that happen in the world, how servants kill their masters and sons kill their fathers, the Kingdom of one vansha goes to another vansha, and one realm is ruled by many rulers.

Bhagwan is the ashray of all the realms and all the people. The ways of Time are such that in it, animals are small at times and large at times. There are times

when cows give very little milk and times when they give milk in abundance. There are times when trees are covered with fruit and times when the fruit is scanty. This entire world is controlled by Time.

There are times when Dharmatmas increase and the adharmik are destroyed; and there are times when the reverse happens. Thus, Bhagwan is the loka-ashray, Dharma-ashray, and pralay-ashray.

Nitya pralay means the daily dying of things. It is continuous. The moment of creation is also the moment of its destruction. Just as you cannot tell when a second starts and when it ends! Can anyone tell this? The beginning and end of a second cannot be decided by the hands of a clock. *Kaala* (time) is *niravayava* (having no parts). It is vast, immense. It is not possible to tell the exact beginning or end of its measure; nor can you tell exactly when it begins in Mumbai and when it begins in Europe, or when it ends. Every *utpatti* (creation; origin) of kaala is its mrityu, and every mrityu is its Utpatti.

The *naimittika pralaya* is a periodical destruction due to some cause. There is a *praakritik pralaya*, which means the natural dissolution of the world.

And, when Tattvagnan gives the bodha of the akhand Paramatma, it is the *aataynatika pralaya*. It is a permanent dissolution of the seeming reality of this interactive world. This is the *apoorvataa* (singular quality) of the Shrimad Bhagwat.

If you read the other Puranas you will find descriptions of pralay, but *srishti* (Creation) comes immediately after. The same kind of srishti happens after mrityu, giving the impression that it is the same world as before.

The water flows in the tap in the same way. The river flows, apparently unchanged. A human being lives in the same way. This is what is perceived. This perception is because it seems as though nothing is changed. The fact is everything changes constantly. Day and night are changing, seconds are changing, and every grain and particle changes continuously. And, from the viewpoint of the akhand advitiya Paramatma nothing else exists.

So, when a person gets Brahmatmaikya bodha there is atyantik pralay for him.

Buddheendriyaartharoope`na gnaana bhaati tadaashrayam.

Gnan is one, but it appears as the *gnaane`ndriya* (sense organs), *karme`ndriya* (organs of action) and *vishaya* (objects of the senses). Only the akhand Gnan is Satya. This is the atyantik pralay.

The *dvaitavaadee* (those who believe in the principle of duality) have tried their utmost to make this compatible with their principle, but they found it impossible. Atyantik pralay can be explained only through the bodha that the Brahman and the Atma are one.

To save yourself from nitya pralay, naimittika pralay and prakrita pralay, you should do Bhagwan's bhajan. Continued bhajan gives Gnan. Bhajan-ashray is also Bhagwan, and Gnan-ashray is also Bhagwan.

Regarding Gnan, Shri Shukadevji Maharaj gave this upadesh to raja Parikshit – *'tvam tu raajan marishye`ti pashubuddhimimaam jahi* – O Rajan, particles are dying, but the Chaitanya sakshi does not die. It is the thinking of fools who are mentally dull like animals, to think, "I am dying". The fact is that the Atma is the akhand Chaitanya Brahman. It does not die in desha, kaala, or vastu. Nor does it die in the absence of all three.'

At the end Raja Parikshit was given this upadesh by Shukadevji Maharaj:

Aham brahma param dhaama brahmaaham paramam padam,

e`vam sameekshannaatmaanamaatmanyaadhaaya nishkale`.

Dashantam takshakam paade`le`lihaanam vishaanamaih,

na drakshyasi shareeram cha vishvam cha prithagaatmanah.

(12. 5. 11-12)

'Think, "I am the Parabrahma that is the substratum of everything," and establish your Self in your anant, akhand swarup. When the takshak approaches your foot

to bite, there is no need for you to worry. You will not perceive your body, or this world, as something separate from your Self.

Think of yourself as the adhishtana Brahman of this entire world of name and form. Think, “The Brahman is me. I am the Brahman.”

Now, the half-baked Vedantis will not be able to grasp why this was said twice – *ahambrahmaparam dhaama brahmaaham paramam padam*.

These days, people say, ‘enough Maharaj’. They get satisfied very quickly. There is a dearth of *jignaasaa* (wish to know). There is no effort to understand in depth.

If the Brahman is separate from our Atma, it will be drishya – something that is seen, separate from the drashta who sees. And, if it is drishya it will be *jada* (inert). And if the Brahman is separate from us, and is *paroksha* (beyond the capacity of the senses) – if it is invisible – then it will be *kalpita* (imagined). It must be experienced sooner or later.

And, if our Atma is separate from the Brahman it will also be separate in desha, kaala and vastu. The Atma cannot be nitya and Satya if it is separate from the Brahman. It will either be kalpita or it will be drishya. Therefore, the Atma is the Brahman, the Brahman is the Atma – this has to be explained repeatedly.

E`vam sameekshannatmaanamaatmanyaadhaaya nishkale`.

‘This Atma is the Brahman’. Examine yourself closely, with this principle in mind. The takshak is a form of kaala (a symbol of death). The word ‘takshak’ has a beautiful meaning in Sanskrit. It means a carpenter who takes an adze in his hand and cuts and beats the wood to give it a new shape. It is the serpent of Time.

Sansaaroragadashtam yat vishnuraatamamoomuchat.

What did Shukadevji do? He liberated Parikshit – who was bitten by the sansara in the form of a snake. That means he made Parikshit free of the wheel of Time, from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Bhagwan is the ashray of Gnan. It is Bhagwan who gives us Veda-Gnan. The philosophies that don’t believe in the Ishwara or Dharma have no need for the

Shastras. For example, the Charvaks believe in neither the Ishwara, nor in Dharma. So they have no need for *saashana* (rules) or the Shastras.

The Jains and Buddhists believe in Dharma, and therefore, they have a need for sashan. The upadesh given by the Teerthankars (liberated Mahatmas) is accepted by them. That is the Jain sashan. The upadesh of the enlightened Masters of the Buddhists is the sashan of the Buddhists. There are the Teerthankaras, there are the sadhakas, and there are the *vidvaana* (learned scholars). Their statements are the three kinds of *vachana* (statements) that are accepted as praman in the books of their religion.

The Buddhist books do not accept the nitya vastu (the eternal Ishwara), so sashan is not predominant in their Dharma; *anumaana* (estimation) and *tarka* (reasoning) is predominant.

The Jains believe the *jeevaatmaa* (Atma attached to a body; an individual) to be *parichhinna* (separate), but it is also accepted as a nitya, shuddha, buddha, *ujjala* (effulgent) form. This is why they have sashan; *ahimsaa* (non-violence) is paramount in their sashan.

Vaishnavas have many different beliefs, habits and practices. They have the Shastras. The Buddhists, however, accept only anuman and tarka; they do not accept any eternal substance like the Ishwara, or the Satya. No object is permanent. No object has its own intrinsic nature. No object is chetan. No object has the form of *pramaana* – *prame`ya* (proof – that, which is proved).

However, the people who accept both the Ishwara and Dharma have to accept the *grantha* (holy book); for example, the Gurugranth Sahib of the Sikhs, the Koran Sharif of the Muslims, the Bible of the Christians, and the Vedas of the Hindus.

Now: are they praman because they are the statements of the Almighty, or are they praman because they reveal the swarup of the Ishwara?

The Koran and the Bible are praman because they reveal the statements of the Almighty; but what is the praman that the Almighty has made these statements?

We do not accept the Vedas as praman because they are the statements made by the Ishwara. This is the difference between the Vedas and the other holy books. The Vedas are praman because they ascertain the *anutpanna* (not created; eternal), *nitya*, *siddha*, *sahaja* (natural), and *apaurushe`ya* (not created by any human being) Chaitanya. That means, the Vedas are accepted as praman because they give the *saakshaatkaara* (direct personal experience) of the vastu. They are not praman because they are the statements made by the Ishwara.

This is why the *gati* (course) of the Gurugrantha sahib is different, the gati of the Koran Sharif is different, the gati of the Bible is different, and the gati of the Vedas is different. To first accept the Ishwara, and then accept His statements is something else. Here, we first have to behave according to the statements, and then we will meet the Ishwara. Bhagwan is the ashray of the Vedas that give us the direct personal experience of the Ishwara.

The Markandey Upakhyana (story) is given after this. It explains that the entire srishti is Maya. To see the *srishti* (Creation), *sthiti* (sustenance) and *pralaya* (dissolution), and the loka (this world), and go into the nose of a baby – Krishna – and see all creation, then find yourself seated on your asana again, and see hundreds of thousands of Yugas and Kalpas (eons of Time) is all Maya. Bhagwan is the ashray of Maya and the ashray of the world. The purpose of the Markandeya Purana is to make us understand this.

The different kinds of upasana are described next. There is the *prateeka* (of a symbol) upasana. The *vanamaalaa* (garland) worn by the Ishwara symbolizes the Maya that has three gunas. The Chakra in Bhagwan's hand symbolizes the wheel of Time. The lotus He holds is a symbol of the jala Tattva. This is how the essential elements of Bhagwan are symbolized in a murti. The murti used for upasana is a prateek. This is what is explained.

This is followed by a detailed explanation of how Bhagwan is the ashray of astronomy and the movements of the planets.

A detailed explanation of how Bhagwan is the ashray of all the leelas in the Bhagwat is given after this, followed by an explanation of Bhagwan being the

ashray of all the Puranas, and the ashray of all Gnan. Bhagwan is the Atmadev and the sakshi of all the vrittis of Gnan, and is the akhand Brahman.

Sarvave`daantasaaram yad brahmaatmaikyavalakshanam,

vastvadviteeyam tannishtham kaivalyaikaprayojanam.

12. 13. 12)

(You know that the quintessence of all the Upanishads is that the Brahman and the Atma are one; they are the Advitiya Vastu. This is the subject established by the Shrimad Bhagwat. The purpose of obtaining this understanding is to obtain Kaivalya Moksha – a state of absolute oneness with the absolute being.)

In the last chapter – the thirteenth chapter – of the Bhagwat, it is asked: ‘Who is the vastu that is the quintessence of all Vedanta?’

It is the advitiya Brahman – *brahmaatmaikya lakshanam advitteeyam vastu* – the characteristic of the non-dual object is the oneness of the Brahman and the Atma. The Kaivalya of the Atma is the purpose of this oneness. That means dvaita has no existence. This is the purport of the entire Shrimad Bhagwat.

I am very grateful to all of you for listening to this twenty day session of discourses on the Bhagwat. Thanks to you I got the opportunity to speak about it. The impact that the Shrimad Bhagwat should have on the life of a human being – and the great importance given to this aspect when the Shrimad Bhagwat was created – is something that is seen from the very first shloka of the first chapter of the first canto. ‘*Janmaadasyayatah*’ (That, by which the earth is created, sustained and destroyed). ‘*Satyam param dheemahi*’ – the nineteenth shloka of the thirteenth chapter of the twelfth canto – meaning, I mediate on that Parameshwara who is the form of the Param Satya.

Removing all feeling of bheda, it is not only the Manav Dharma – it includes the *praanee* (of all beings) Dharma, the *padaartha* (of all matter) Dharma, Ishwara Dharma, jeeva Dharma, Brahma Dharma, and Prakriti Dharma. They all come within the Bhagwat-Dharma.

You listened lovingly, quietly, with great interest. You combined goodwill prompted the discourse. I have nothing to say. I remember the Mahatmas and remain engrossed in the memory of their words. It was your *praarabdha* (destiny created by past actions) that inspired what I said. To tell the truth, talks about Bhagwan are not due to *prarabdha* either; Satsang is obtained by Bhagwan's *kripa*, by His compassion. Our *karmas* don't have the capacity to bring Satsang. So, *aho bhaagya* – it is not right to praise our own good fortune!

The *shrota* listens through the *indriya* of *Gnan*, and the *vakta* speaks through the *indriya* of *karma*. From this viewpoint, the *shrota* is superior to the *vakta*, because the *gnanendriyas* are superior to the *karmendriyas*. We use the *buddhi* to speak, and then the substance enters the *buddhi* of the one who listens. The person who listens obtains new *gnan*, whereas the speaker talks about what is already known to him. To bring *gnan* into *karma* is to speak, and to bring what is heard into the *buddhi* is to do *shravan*.

The *Shastras* are all *antarmukha* – they are turned inwards. Everybody knows about Bhagwan. May Bhagwan give you *mangal*. May *Bhakti* for Bhagwan arise in your *hriday*, and may your *antahkarana* become *shuddha*. Let true *Gnan* arise in it, destroying your *agnan*, so that only Bhagwan remains; there is no *raaga-dvesha*, no old age-death, *dukha*, *sukha*, *bheda*, or *bhram*. Everything is the *Ishwara*.

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

